NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08254733 6

The WHITE WOLF

ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR

Indians, N.C. — Fiction

AH

To Harold Haas 5/10/21

from

Louis B Haas.

gift

NAS

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/whitewolf00greg

THE WHITE WOLF

By ELMER R. GREGOR

White Otter
Running Fox
The White Wolf

These are Appleton Books

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
Publishers New York

T 228

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
B L

HE WAS CROUCHING AND CLOSELY SCANNING THE GROUND

THE WHITE WOLF

BY

ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR

AUTHOR OF "RUNNING FOX," "WHITE OTTER," ETC.

FRONTISPIECE BY
D. C. HUTCHINSON

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK : 1921 : LONDON

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
274348B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1944 L

COPYRIGHT, 1921, BY
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Hunting Moon	1
II.	A Cry in the Night	11
III.	A Battle of Giants	24
IV.	The Lynx Den	36
V.	The Wounded Elk	56
VI.	A Forest Fire	67
VII.	The Hunger Moon	76
VIII.	Sky Dog Tells a Story	90
IX.	Off on a Perilous Quest	106
X.	The Lone Sentinel	125
XI.	A Hostile Camp	143
XII.	The Unknown Captive	151
XIII.	A Daring Rescue	161
XIV.	The Blizzard	172
XV.	A Fresh Trail	193
XVI.	At Bay	204
XVII.	Mohawks!	222
XVIII.	A Desperate Plight	237
XIX.	A Running Fight	249
XX.	The Triumphant Return	258

The WHITE WOLF

CHAPTER I

THE HUNTING MOON

Pooxit, the time of falling leaves, had passed, and Mauwallauwin, the time for hunting, was at hand. The Delaware camp hummed with activity. The Delawares were preparing for the great autumn hunt. It was the sole topic of conversation. They had thought of little else since the celebration of their annual harvest festival some weeks previous. Many hunting parties had been organized, each under command of a skillful leader. There was keen rivalry between these men, each of whom hoped to win glory by securing the most game. All of them had spent many days fasting, and praying to Getanittowit, the Great One, and to make doubly sure of success they had given many presents to old Sky Dog, the medicine-man, who had made the same boastful pledges to all. As usual, the most renowned hunters gained the most recruits, as each man was eager to enlist

in the company which seemed likely to be most successful.

One of the most popular leaders was the famous young warrior Running Fox, the son of the Delaware war-chief. This lad of seventeen winters had gained great fame the previous year in a series of daring exploits against the Mohawks. Accompanied by a single companion he had journeyed to the Mohawk camp, and after a long and perilous captivity succeeded in carrying away a famous medicine-trophy which the Delawares believed made the great Mohawk chief, Standing Wolf, invincible. Later, when Standing Wolf led an immense war-party against the Delaware camp, Running Fox killed him in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter, and led the Delawares to a splendid victory.

These great achievements convinced the Delawares that the Mohawk medicine-trophy had given Running Fox the same mysterious powers which for years they had credited to Standing Wolf. They looked upon the lad as one destined to become even a greater leader than his father, their famous chief, Black Panther, and they were eager to follow him in anything he might undertake.

Running Fox, therefore, had his choice of the best hunters in the tribe. However, he selected only a few of the most skillful from the great

number who asked to join his company. The first of those chosen was his friend Spotted Deer, a young warrior of his own age, who had shared his adventures with the Mohawks.

"Running Fox, you have asked me to go with you. It is good," said Spotted Deer. "You are a great warrior, and a good hunter. I believe we will kill the most game."

"Spotted Deer, you are my brother. We have done some big things together. I will always ask you to go with me," replied Running Fox.

At twilight criers went through the village telling the people that Mauwallauwin, the hunting moon, would soon appear, and calling upon all to prepare to greet him. The Delawares hastened to the council fire in the center of the camp, where the chiefs and hunters had already assembled.

"My people, look up there," Black Panther cried, pointing toward the eastern sky. "Pretty soon the great Mauwallauwin will appear. First he will peep over the top of that ridge to see if we are ready to receive him. When you see the top of his head you must shout out his name. Then he will know that we have been watching for him, and he will feel good. When he shows himself we will begin singing the hunting songs. See, the light is going. Pretty soon he will come. Watch."

An impressive silence fell upon the assemblage. Only the crackle of the flames broke the stillness. The Delawares, men, women and children, stood rigid, with their eyes fixed expectantly on the eastern sky. Thus they waited while the twilight slowly faded, and the night shadows darkened the heavens.

Then the first stars appeared directly above the camp, and old Sky Dog unwrapped the sacred medicine-pipe. He carried it to the fire that he might be ready to light it as soon as Mauwallauwin showed himself. A few moments later the first faint glow showed in the east.

"He is coming," the Delawares whispered, excitedly.

They watched patiently while the light gradually strengthened, and then as a small rim of gold appeared above the somber black ridge they united in a great shout of welcome.

"Hi, Mauwallauwin, we see you!" they shouted. "See, we are waiting for you."

Then as the great yellow hunting moon rose slowly in view the aged medicine-man lighted the pipe, and puffed the smoke toward the eastern sky. Three times he puffed the smoke, and then he extended the pipe stem as an invitation for Mauwallauwin to smoke. When this simple act of devotion had been observed, he turned to the Delawares and asked them to join him in the song of welcome.

"Hi, here is the great Mauwallauwin.
It is Mauwallauwin, our brother.
It is Mauwallauwin, the great hunter.
Mauwallauwin has come to help us.
O Great Mauwallauwin, take pity on us.
O Great Hunter, send us much meat."

As the moon rose clear of the ridge, Black Panther raised his hand as a signal to cease singing. Then he called the hunters before him. When they had assembled, he turned his face toward the heavens, and addressed the great Mauwallauwin.

"See, Mauwallauwin, these hunters have come here to greet you. You are their chief. You are the greatest hunter of all. Pretty soon these men will go away to hunt. O Great Mauwallauwin, help them so that they will bring back plenty of meat. O Great Hunter, take pity on us. I have spoken."

When Black Panther finished his appeal, the hunters formed a circle about the fire, and began the hunting dance. Each company followed its leader, and each leader tried to surpass his fellows in the wild antics of the dance. It was a fascinating spectacle as the sinewy young warriors circled slowly about the fire, going through all the maneuvers of the chase. Some stooped and searched the ground for tracks. Some crept stealthily forward as if stalking game. Some aimed their arrows at

imaginary targets. Some engaged in desperate struggles with imaginary bears, stabbing and lunging fiercely with their hunting knives. All continually imitated the cries and calls of the different birds and beasts which they hoped to kill.

Then, while the dance was at its height, old Sky Dog suddenly rushed into the circle, and called upon the dancers to stop. As his astonished tribesmen began to remonstrate, the excited medicine-man pointed frantically toward the sky. The Delawares saw that the moon had disappeared behind a bank of clouds.

"It is a bad sign!" cried Sky Dog. "Mauwallauwin has covered his face. Something has made him angry."

The Delawares peered anxiously into the sky, hoping each moment that the great Mauwallauwin would show himself. Then as the heavens grew steadily darker, and even the stars began to disappear, a great fear fell upon the people.

"We have driven away Mauwallauwin!" they cried in dismay. "The Great Hunter has turned against us."

The superstitious Delawares were thrown into a panic. They had little doubt that the sudden disappearance of the hunting moon foretold some great disaster. To add to their alarm, a great wind swept down from the ridges, and scattered the embers of their fire

about the camp so that the bark lodges were in danger of taking fire.

"See, Mauwallauwin has sent Lowanachen, the north wind, to kill our fire, and burn our lodges!" cried the terrorized Delawares.

"Listen, my people, I have something to tell you," said Black Panther. "Mauwallauwin has turned away. It is a bad sign. We must be brave. We are not children. Fierce Lowanachen is making a great noise. Well, we have heard him before. He cannot frighten us. Come, we will ask Sky Dog to do something."

"My friends, I do not like this thing," Sky Dog told them. "I am an old man. I remember a long ways back. I have seen this happen before. When it came to pass much trouble came upon us. For many moons we were very hungry. If Mauwallauwin has turned against us, it will be hard to find meat. It is bad, but I am not afraid. Lowanachen does not frighten me. Pretty soon I will do something to drive him away. Now all of you must do just as I tell you. Perhaps I can bring back Mauwallauwin."

Having finished his talk, the old medicine-man hurried to his lodge, and returned with a bundle of dried herbs. He threw several handfuls upon the fire. Then he began to dance. He hopped awkwardly about in a small circle, shaking a turtle-shell rattle filled with corn,

and singing a sacred medicine-song. When he was quite exhausted he lighted the medicine-pipe, and puffed the smoke toward the earth, the sky and the north.

"See, he is driving away Lowanachen," whispered the Delawares, as the wind chanced to slacken its fury. Encouraged by the confidence of his tribesmen, Sky Dog increased his exertions. Carried away by superstitious zeal, the old medicine-man pranced about the fire with the agility of a youth. The Delawares looked upon him with astonishment. They believed that he had suddenly become possessed of some mysterious power which transformed him into a superior being. As he danced, and shouted, and waved his sacred rattle the tempest passed, and a sudden calm settled upon the wilderness. The Delawares were convinced that Sky Dog was responsible for it.

"He has frightened away fierce Lowanachen. Perhaps he will call back Mauwallauwin," they told one another, hopefully.

However, in spite of his exertions which he continued until he dropped with exhaustion, the moon failed to show itself. The heavens remained black and threatening, and the Delawares went to their lodges in despair. Some of the old men recalled similar occurrences, and they declared that great privation and suffering invariably followed.

"It is bad," they cried ominously, when any one questioned them.

The hunters were filled with gloom. Each secretly wondered if the leader under whom he had enlisted had in some manner earned the displeasure of Mauwallauwin. The leaders, themselves, were equally disturbed. Each realized that bad luck in the hunt would surely be interpreted by his tribesmen as proof that it was he who had incurred the ill-will of Mauwallauwin.

None felt a keener sense of his responsibility than Running Fox. As the youngest of all the hunting leaders, he was particularly eager to bring honor to the famous hunters who had enlisted in his company. He realized that those men were risking their reputations on his ability, and he dreaded to think of failing them. The mere possibility threw him into the deepest despair. Until the strange disappearance of Mauwallauwin he had felt confident of success. Since that unfortunate incident, however, he, too, had become a prey to many gloomy forebodings.

Twice during the long night Running Fox stole quietly from his father's lodge, and made his way to the edge of the camp to watch for Mauwallauwin. The second time he found his friend Spotted Deer entering the village.

"Hi, my brother, I see that you are watch-

ing for Mauwallauwin to come back," said Running Fox.

"Yes, Running Fox, I have been up there on that ridge trying to find him," Spotted Deer replied, gloomily.

"Well, did you see him?" Running Fox inquired, anxiously.

"No, I did not see anything of him," said Spotted Deer. "But I heard something strange up there on that ridge."

"What was it?" asked Running Fox.

"I do not know," Spotted Deer told him. "It sounded like Timmeu, the wolf, but it was different. First it came from far away where fierce Lowanachen lives. Then it came from over there where the light appears. Then pretty soon it came from over there where the sun sleeps. It was mysterious. That is all I know about it."

"Perhaps it was Lowanachen," suggested Running Fox. "Perhaps he is mad because Sky Dog frightened him away."

"I do not know what it was, but I believe it was something bad," Spotted Deer declared, uneasily.

The lads continued to watch for Mauwallauwin until the first pale hint of daylight showed in the east. Then they gave up hope, and retired to their lodges to prepare for the hunt.

CHAPTER II

A CRY IN THE NIGHT

TACHQUOAKCHEEN, the great autumn hunt, began at daylight. As the last lingering night shadows faded from the wilderness, the Delaware hunters left the camp, and formed in companies before the village. Then they paraded slowly about the village, singing their hunting songs. The Delawares watched them in silence. The gayety and enthusiasm which usually marked the event were strangely lacking. An air of depression seemed to have settled upon the tribe. The strange behavior of Mauwallauwin had filled the Delawares with grave doubts for the success of the hunt, and they had little heart for rejoicing. After completing the customary ceremony, therefore, the hunters slipped silently away into the dim solitudes of the forest. They were gone almost before the Delawares realized it.

"See, the hunters have left us," cried Black Panther. "They have gone to bring us meat. Come, we must ask Getanittowit, the Great One, to help them. We must make many smokes to Mauwallauwin, the Great Hunter."

The camp contained only the chiefs, the medicine-man, the old people, and the women and children. Sky Dog called upon all of them to assemble before the Council Lodge. Then, once again, they smoked the peace-pipe, and sang to Mauwallauwin to help them.

"O Great Mauwallauwin, take pity on us.
O Great Hunter, send us meat.
O Great Mauwallauwin, help us.
Mauwallauwin, you have frightened us.
O Great Mauwallauwin, make us strong again."

The wavering voices of the old men, the high tones of the women, and the shrill cries of the children united in a stirring appeal that rose from the camp, and followed the hunters into the wilderness.

Soon after leaving the camp the hunting parties separated, and set out in different directions. They planned to form a great circle, and then gradually close in, to trap whatever game might be between them. The hunt was scheduled to continue five days, and at the end of that time they agreed to return to the village with their trophies.

The party led by Running Fox was composed of ten hunters including the youthful leader. It was a notable company, for most of its members were famous both as hunters and warriors. Among them was Painted Hawk, a noted bear

hunter, a man who had gained great fame by his daring exploits on the war-trail. Another famous member was Yellow Wolf, a great stalwart warrior who had led two successful war expeditions against the Shawnees. Then there was Dancing Owl, a hot-tempered young warrior who had ambushed and killed several Mohawk scouts whom he discovered prowling about the Delaware camp. There was also Crooked Foot, a great hunter and scout, whose body bore the scars from a desperate fight with a wounded panther. The others were equally renowned, and Running Fox looked upon them with pride and respect.

When the hunting parties separated, Running Fox led his companions toward the west. They made their way to the summit of a high pine-clad ridge which commanded a splendid view of the surrounding country. Then Running Fox stopped to hold a council.

"My friends, before we begin this great hunt I will give you some words," he told them. "Look about you. Getanittowit, the Great One, has made everything good. He has given us a good place to live in. He has put the water here. He has put fish in the water. He has put the woods here. He has put game in the woods. He has told us when to fish. He has told us when to hunt. Now it is time to hunt. We have come here to find meat for our people.

We must do our best. My friends, you are great hunters. I will not tell you what to do. You know how to find the things we have come to kill. It is enough. Now we will see what we can find. I have finished."

Running Fox divided his little company into patrols of two warriors each, and permitted them to select their own hunting territory. As usual, he asked Spotted Deer to accompany him. Then he appointed a rendezvous where all were to meet at the end of the fifth day. It was agreed, however, that if any of them should discover signs of enemies they would immediately warn their comrades. The call of Gokhos, the barred owl, to be given three times and ended abruptly the third time, was selected as the danger signal.

Having arranged these details, the hunters immediately separated. Running Fox and Spotted Deer set out toward the north. For some time they continued along the top of the ridge, carefully scanning the country in which they intended to hunt. A considerable distance to the westward a good-sized woodland lake showed distinctly against the somber background of the forest. The Delawares called it Moschpekat, clear water. It was a favorite hunting ground, and both Running Fox and Spotted Deer had often trapped and hunted along its shores.

"See, there is Moschpekat," cried Running Fox. "It looks pretty. Come, we will go over there, and see what we can find."

They moved cautiously down the ridge, watching and listening for the first signs of game. It was a glorious day. The air was soft and balmy, the sky was cloudless, and a smoky blue haze hung over the hills. It seemed almost as if Tauwinipen, the month-of-growing-things, had returned.

"See, Getanittowit is smoking his Great Peace Pipe," said Running Fox, referring to the haze. "He is puffing the smoke over us."

"It is a good sign," Spotted Deer declared, hopefully.

The warm autumn sunshine quickly melted the frost on the fallen leaves, and the hunters were able to move through the woods as noiselessly as Woakus, the fox. They had almost reached the base of the ridge when they were halted by the noisy commotion of a flock of jays.

"Hi, those birds are making a great noise," said Spotted Deer. "Come, we will go over there, and see what they are talking about."

"We must be cautious," Running Fox warned him. "Perhaps some one is over there."

The Delawares looked upon crows and jays as the talebearers of the wilderness. They

knew from experience that whenever a company of those birds set up a great racket it was because they had discovered something unusual in their haunts. It might be only a hawk or a fox, or it might be a company of warriors. Whenever the birds became unusually noisy, therefore, the Delawares scouted cautiously about the vicinity to learn the cause of their distress.

Running Fox and his companion decided to separate, and approach the spot from opposite directions. Aware that both Shawnees and Mohawks often ventured upon their hunting grounds, the lads advanced through the woods with the utmost care. Their desire was to learn the cause of the disturbance without themselves being discovered by the jays. They knew that if the birds saw them they would instantly make them the sole object of alarm, and proclaim their advance to whatever might be lurking in the vicinity.

Spotted Deer was crawling stealthily through a dense tangle of wild grape vines when he suddenly heard Running Fox calling directly ahead of him.

"Hi, my brother, I have found something," said Running Fox.

Freeing himself from the tangle, Spotted Deer hurried to join him. Running Fox was looking up into the branches of a tall pine.

Following his gaze, Spotted Deer soon discovered a large barred owl sitting motionless on a limb. The crows and jays were flying excitedly about the tree-top, and raising a great disturbance.

"Gokhos has caused all this noise," laughed Running Fox. "He stopped in that tree to sleep. Then his enemies came along and found him. Now they are trying to frighten him away."

"He is mad," said Spotted Deer.

Several jays had alighted upon the limb on which the owl sat, and the latter immediately raised its feathers and snapped angrily. Its tormentors were not easily frightened, however, and in a few moments several of them dashed recklessly past the owl's head. Then a crow swept down through the branches, and almost knocked the astonished owl from the limb. The young Delawares laughed with boyish glee, and at sound of their voices Gokhos took wing and flapped silently away with his foes in noisy pursuit. They soon drove him into another tree, and the commotion began anew.

"Well, we have found out about this thing—now we will go away from here," said Running Fox.

Having learned the reason for the disturbance, the Delawares had no inclination to linger in the vicinity. They knew that the same curi-

osity which had led them to investigate might bring some prowling foe on the same errand. They left Gokhos to his fate, therefore, and set out for the lake which they had seen from the top of the ridge.

The day was drawing to a close when the young hunters finally drew near Moschpekat. They approached it with great caution, for they knew that foes as well as game might be found lurking in the dense forest which fringed its shores. They were almost at the edge of the water when they were startled by a wild, ringing laugh. It echoed weirdly across the water, and seemed to come from the opposite side of the lake. The Delawares quickly recognized it as the cry of the loon.

"It is Quiquingus, the Laugher," said Running Fox.

They saw no reason to doubt that the call was genuine, still they determined to take no chances. Seating themselves in the bushes a short distance from the water, they searched the lake for the loon. It was some moments before they located it.

"Hi, I see him," Spotted Deer said, softly. "He is over there near that big white tree."

"Yes, I see him," Running Fox replied, a moment afterward. "Well, now we know that it is Quiquingus."

However, the crafty young hunters had no

intention of risking themselves in the open until they had thoroughly reconnoitered the lake. As its name proclaimed, it was a splendid body of clear transparent water bounded on three sides by low wooded hills, and on the other side by a great sphagnum bog. It was a natural rendezvous for deer, elk and moose, and in the spring and autumn its waters were often covered with great flocks of wild fowl. In fact, the young Delawares had expected to find one or more flocks of ducks within easy bow-shot from the shore, and they were considerably surprised to learn that Quiquingus, the Laugher, was in sole possession of beautiful Moschpekat.

As they saw nothing to arouse their suspicions, the lads determined to move slowly along the easterly shore of the lake until they came to their favorite camp-site, a little fern-fringed spring in a dense stand of hemlocks. They had not gone far, however, when they were halted by the excited scolding of Wisawanik, the squirrel. After they had listened a moment or so they heard another replying to the challenge of the first.

"Now we will have something to eat," laughed Running Fox.

They immediately set out to find the squirrels. It was not long before they located them in two large chestnut trees about a bow-shot apart. As the hunters drew near, however, the

wary little creatures immediately grew silent, and attempted to hide themselves. The Delawares sat down near the base of the trees, and waited patiently. In a few moments the sharp twang of a bow-string, followed by a dull thump on the leaves, told Spotted Deer that Running Fox had killed his game. Then he, too, saw his squirrel. It was peeping over the side of a large limb, with only its head exposed. It offered a small and difficult target, and Spotted Deer determined to wait. In a few moments the squirrel started boldly down the trunk of the tree, and when it was near the ground Spotted Deer pinned it to the tree with his arrow.

Having made sure of their evening meal, the lads lost little time in reaching their camp-site. The sun had already set behind the western ridges, and lake and sky were a glorious combination of gold and purple. The young Delawares looked about them in silent admiration.

"Getanittowit has made everything pretty," Running Fox said, reverently.

"It is true," replied Spotted Deer.

Then, as the color slowly faded from sky and water, and the mystic twilight shadows crept stealthily out of the east, the lads gathered some dry wood and made a small fire. They watched anxiously as the first light pall of blue smoke rose above the trees. It soon faded out, however, and they had little fear of its being seen

Then they skinned and cleaned the squirrels, and broiled them on sharpened sticks before the fire.

When they had finished their simple meal, the Delawares allowed the fire to die out. Then they walked to the edge of the water, and seated themselves on a prostrate pine. Night had fallen upon the forest, and the sky was spangled with a multitude of stars. The air was sharp and still, and Topan, the Frost Spirit, plied his magic wand. Not a sound disturbed the stillness. The great wilderness was hushed in slumber. The lads were silent. Each had his eyes fixed hopefully on the eastern sky. They were watching anxiously for the great Mauwallauwin to show himself. When he finally peeped above the tree-tops, they sprang to their feet, and extended their hands in greeting.

"O Great Mauwallauwin, take pity on us. O Great Hunter, help us," they sang, softly.

They had been greatly troubled by the strange behavior of Mauwallauwin on the previous night, and although the appointed time for the ceremonial greeting of the Great Hunter had passed they still hoped to win his favor. They had been strongly impressed by the scarcity of game signs, and they feared that unless Mauwallauwin relented and came to their assistance the hunt would be a failure. They watched eagerly, therefore, while the moon rose

slowly into the cloudless sky. As it mounted higher and higher in its course, and tinted the night with its soft, silvery radiance, the Delawares took hope.

"See, Mauwallauwin has come back to help us," Spotted Deer said, hopefully.

"It is good," declared Running Fox.

However, when the night was half gone they were awakened by a cold wind which swept down from the north. The moon had disappeared. The sky was black and threatening. The lads turned to each other in dismay.

"Mauwallauwin has gone," said Spotted Deer.

"It is a bad sign," Running Fox replied, uneasily. "I do not know what to make of it. I believe something bad will happen to us."

Then, as they sat there listening to the moaning of Lowanachen, the north wind, they heard a strange quavering cry somewhere in the north. It rose into a long, melancholy wail, and then suddenly died away. Spotted Deer started nervously, and grasped Running Fox by the arm.

"Allapi, Allapi, listen, listen," he whispered, excitedly.

"What is it?" Running Fox inquired, anxiously.

"It is the noise I heard when I was on the

ridge watching for Mauwallauwin," Spotted Deer told him.

"Allapi," cautioned Running Fox, as the mysterious cry began again.

As it again sounded ominously through the night the Delawares tried to identify it. It sounded somewhat like the cry of Timmeu, the big gray timber wolf, and yet there was a strange fierceness about it that made it different. It gradually swelled in volume until it became a wild, piercing shriek, and then it suddenly ceased. It was the weirdest, most peculiar cry they had ever heard, and they were completely mystified.

"How do you feel about it?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"I do not know what it is," Running Fox acknowledged. "Perhaps it is fierce Lowanachen. Perhaps it is something different. I believe it is something mysterious."

They listened a long time, but the strange cry was not repeated. However, it had filled them with all sorts of vague, superstitious fears, and they lost all further desire to sleep. They spent the balance of the night talking about the mysterious summons which had come out of the north.

CHAPTER III

A BATTLE OF GIANTS

It was still dark when they left their camp-site, and set out for the swamp at the other end of the lake. They reached it as the first gray hint of dawn showed in the east. The swamp was wrapped in a heavy white mist that rose from the water, and the lads were unable to see a bow-shot ahead of them. They concealed themselves at the edge of the timber, therefore, and waited impatiently for the fog to rise. It was not long before their ears told them of the things which Awonn, the fog, concealed. They heard the loud honking of Kaak, the wild goose. A sudden splash told them that Sukamek, the bass, was feeding. A stealthy pattering of swift, cautious feet led them to believe that Woakus, the fox, was hurrying to his den at the approach of day. Then the fog slowly lifted, and they saw the calm, gray waters of Moschpekat. A flock of ducks rose on whistling wings, and sped away toward the south. A few moments afterward three geese towered into the air. Running Fox imitated their call, and they swerved and flew

directly over the marsh. The Delawares aimed their arrows, but the birds were considerably beyond bow-shot, and they made no attempt to stop them.

Then a loud, ringing challenge sounded over the marsh. It seemed to come from a low hardwood ridge a short distance away. The lads recognized it as the call of a bull moose, and their hearts filled with hope. They waited in great suspense to hear it again. Long, trying moments passed. The stillness remained unbroken. The Delawares became uneasy. They feared that the moose had gone away.

"Wait, perhaps I can fool him," said Running Fox.

He turned into the woods, and soon found a good-sized white birch from which he peeled a slab of bark. He rolled it into the form of a funnel, and tied it with several strands of twisted marsh grass. Then he returned to the edge of the marsh, and raising the bark horn to his lips sent forth a skillful imitation of the moose call. The lads listened anxiously as it echoed through the forest.

"If he hears that perhaps he will turn around," said Running Fox.

He had barely finished speaking when an answer came from directly behind them. They looked at each other in astonishment. It seemed impossible that the bull could have traveled that

distance since they first heard him. In fact, there was something about the call which made them doubt that it came from the same animal. Running Fox waited a moment or so after the call had died away, and then he again sent his defiant challenge ringing through the woods.

"Now we will find out about this thing," he said, as he lowered the bark horn.

In a short time a reply came from the direction of the low hardwood ridge where they had first located the moose.

"Mos travels fast," laughed Spotted Deer.

"Nischa, two," replied Running Fox.

As he spoke the second call again sounded behind them. Then they knew that two bulls were replying to their challenge. The discovery filled them with delight. Their gloomy forebodings instantly fled before the possibility of such splendid success in the first few hours of the hunt. Still, they feared to become too hopeful, for they knew only too well the vast difference between hearing game, and killing it.

"We must not feel too good about this thing," Running Fox warned.

"No, we cannot tell what will come of it," agreed Spotted Deer. "Mos is sly."

In the meantime another challenge sounded from the vicinity of the ridge, and the Delawares thought it was nearer. They waited anxiously for the other moose to reply. It

failed to answer, however, and they were somewhat puzzled as to just what to do.

"Come, you must bring him here," whispered Spotted Deer.

Running Fox raised the bark to his lips, and substituted the softer call of the cow moose for the defiant challenge of the bull. Almost at once both bulls replied. They were approaching the marsh. The elated young hunters chuckled gleefully.

"Mauwallauwin is helping us," whispered Spotted Deer.

"Sh," cautioned Running Fox.

At that moment they heard one of the moose at the edge of the timber. It was the one from the ridge. The excited lads peered anxiously through the bushes as they heard the bull stamping and grunting, and shaking the saplings with its horns.

"Mos is mad," breathed Spotted Deer.

Running Fox nodded.

There was no wind to betray them, and there seemed little chance of being discovered. Still they were somewhat uneasy about the second moose. They knew that it was somewhere behind them, and they feared that it might come directly upon them in advancing to meet its rival. Their anxiety was soon ended, however, when they heard it grunting and breaking the

brush several arrow-flights from their hiding place.

Then the first moose appeared at the edge of the timber. It was an enormous beast with a tremendous spread of antlers, and they looked upon it with astonishment. It was some distance beyond bow-shot, however, and the lads breathed a silent prayer to Getanittowit to drive it within range. It appeared to be looking directly toward them, and they were afraid to move. Then the bull lowered its great head, and sniffed suspiciously at the edge of the bog. The next moment it heard or scented its rival, and it raised its head and stared defiantly across the marsh.

A short, savage grunt announced the arrival of the second bull. Cautiously turning their heads, the lads saw it leaving the timber. It was a big animal, but not as huge as the other. This moose was also beyond effective arrow-range, and the young hunters were filled with despair.

"Call them," whispered Spotted Deer.

"No, no, they are too near," replied Running Fox.

In the meantime the moose were preparing for battle. Having actually sighted each other they seemed eager to fight. They looked ugly and dangerous as they faced one another with flashing eyes, and bristling manes. They spent

some time shaking their heads and stamping angrily. Then the larger bull moved slowly out upon the marsh. He advanced threateningly with neck extended, ears flattened and teeth exposed.

"Get ready," whispered Spotted Deer.

The warning was unnecessary as the bull stopped out of bow-shot. Then the other bull went forward to meet its rival. It passed barely within arrow-range, but the Delawares withheld their arrows. They knew the tremendous vitality of the great beast, and they believed it would be folly to attempt to kill it unless it came nearer. They watched with fascinated eyes, therefore, while the two giant bulls prepared to fight.

They met in a terrific head-to-head crash of antlers that almost threw them from their feet. Then, quickly recovering, they pushed and butted each other with a savage ferocity that left little doubt as to the fate that awaited the vanquished. The battle grew fiercer each moment, and it was not long before their loud breathing and heaving flanks told the force that they were expending in the struggle. Neither of them, however, showed any signs of yielding. Time after time they drew apart and then crashed together again, and began the jostling with unabated fury. Each time they met head against head, and neither seemed able to find

an opening for the vital thrust that might clinch the victory. More than once they were knocked to their knees by the force of the impact, but they invariably struggled to their feet in time to save themselves.

Each moment the eager young hunters hoped that the infuriated bulls would come within effective bow-range. Several times they actually did draw nearer the spot where the excited Delawares crouched behind the bushes, but just as they were about to aim their arrows the moose struggled out of range. The lads were frantic. It seemed as if Mauwallauwin was tantalizing them by withholding his prizes just beyond their reach.

At that moment, however, the big bull found an opening, and drove his antlers against the flank of his rival. The latter gave way before the shock, and both animals approached considerably nearer the hunters. Once more the Delawares fitted arrows to their bows, and waited in breathless suspense.

In the meantime the battle was continued with undiminished fury. Having been forced to yield ground, the smaller bull fought fiercely to hold off its foe. A great gash had been opened in its shoulder, and its heaving sides and loud breathing foretold an early collapse. Still it showed no inclination to run away. The larger bull, too, showed the effects of his tre-

mendous exertions. Although he appeared to be uninjured, the repeated charges of his courageous adversary were slowly sapping his strength. Then the great bull again found an opening, and forced his foe to give further ground, and the hunters got their chance. The sudden turn in the fight brought the moose well within bow-shot, and the Delawares released their arrows. Running Fox aimed at the larger animal, and his arrow struck close behind the shoulder. Spotted Deer hit the other bull, but the arrow glanced off and fell to the ground.

An instant later the moose were racing across the marsh in opposite directions. The Delawares rushed from concealment and shot two more arrows. They missed, however, and the bulls disappeared into the timber.

When all sounds of the retreating moose had ceased Spotted Deer threw his bow upon the ground in a rage. Running Fox stared angrily at the woods. It was some moments before either of them spoke. Then Spotted Deer picked up his bow and carefully examined it. He drew an arrow from the buckskin case, and turned it slowly about in his hands. Pointing to a distant pine, he shot the arrow into the center of the trunk. He shook his head and turned to Running Fox who had been closely watching him.

"Hattape, the bow, is strong; Mallsannuk,

the arrow, flies straight; my eyes are sharp. None of them went against me. No, my brother, it must be something different," declared Spotted Deer.

"What you say is true," replied Running Fox. "I see your arrow sticking in that tree. I see your other arrow lying on the ground. Mos, the great deer, is not as hard as Pindalanak, the pine. The arrow sticks in Pindalanak, but it falls out of Mos. It is mysterious. I believe that Mauwallauwin had something to do with it."

"It is bad," said Spotted Deer.

Running Fox had little hope that his own arrow had taken effect upon the big bull. The moose had galloped away, apparently uninjured, and Running Fox feared that his aim had been poor. Still he determined to make sure.

"Come, we will go over there and look around," he proposed.

They hastened to the spot where the moose had fought, and carefully examined the ground. They saw nothing but evidences of the battle. Then they set out on the trail of the big bull. They followed it far into the timber, but saw nothing to indicate that the moose had been badly wounded. Then Running Fox suddenly stooped, and picked his arrow from the ground. He examined it critically, and passed it to Spotted Deer.

"See, it is dry—there is no blood on it," he said.

"It is mysterious," replied Spotted Deer.

They believed that it would be folly to attempt to overtake the moose, and they determined to return to the edge of the swamp. Running Fox continued to call until the day was well advanced, but his challenge went unanswered. They waited patiently, however, hoping that other game might come to the marsh to feed or drink. Several times they heard something moving cautiously through the woods, but the sounds invariably ceased or moved off in some other direction. Several flocks of ducks alighted on the lake, and Running Fox tried to call them within bow-range, but they either remained far out on the water or swam leisurely toward the opposite shore. It really seemed to the superstitious young Delawares as if some evil spirit was working against them.

"This place is bad," said Running Fox. "We must go away."

"Yes, I believe it would be foolish to stay here," agreed Spotted Deer.

They hunted faithfully until the end of the day, but without success. They saw plenty of tracks and signs, but all were many days old. At sunset they stopped for the night beside a small stream in a great forest of hardwoods.

Their evening meal consisted of an emergency ration of parched corn and some chestnuts which they had found in the forest. However, they accepted the simple fare without complaint, for they had been taught from earliest childhood that it was the part of a coward to shrink from privation and hardship.

"We are like Wisawanik, the squirrel," laughed Spotted Deer, as he munched a handful of chestnuts.

"Our great brother, Machque, the bear, eats such food when he cannot find game," Running Fox reminded him. "We have something to eat. It is enough."

For a long time they sat silently beside their fire. Their hearts were filled with a great superstitious fear, and they were gloomy and depressed. They were firmly convinced that Mauwallauwin had turned against them, and that for some reason Getanittowit, the Great One, refused to come to their assistance.

Then, as they finally lay down to sleep, they again heard the weird, mysterious cry in the north. As it echoed dismally between the hills, the Delawares were seized with a gloomy premonition of impending disaster. They had little doubt that this strange call, which they were unable to identify, came from some evil spirit who intended harm to their people.

"It is mysterious," Spotted Deer said, as the cry finally ceased.

"I believe that something bad is going to happen to us," declared Running Fox.

"Running Fox, are you afraid of this strange thing?" Spotted Deer inquired, anxiously.

"No, I am not afraid," Running Fox replied, quickly. "I am thinking about our people. I believe something bad will happen to them."

CHAPTER IV

THE LYNX DEN

The following day the lads determined to separate so that they might explore a greater expanse of country in their search for game. Running Fox turned toward the west, while Spotted Deer traveled toward the east. They agreed to hunt in a circular course, and selected a prominent rendezvous where they hoped to meet before sunset.

"Be watchful, perhaps the Mohawks are about," Running Fox cautioned, as they parted.

"My eyes are sharp," Spotted Deer assured him.

Running Fox crossed a low barren ridge, and soon reached the borders of a great spruce swamp. It was a famous place for game, and he approached it with fresh hopes. His people called it Sukelechen, "the black place," and they believed that it was the home of many strange and mysterious creatures. However, as Running Fox had already explored its dim, gloomy solitudes without encountering anything but the wary animals of the wilderness, he gave little thought to the weird tales he had heard about Sukelechen.

He found a familiar game trail which passed directly through the center of the swamp, and as he saw a fresh buck track he resolved to follow it. A careful study of the footprints convinced him that the buck was a big one, and but a short distance ahead of him. Its tracks showed that it was walking leisurely, and as the wind favored him Running Fox hoped for success. He followed swiftly on the trail, keeping a sharp watch ahead, for he knew from experience that a wise old buck traveling against the wind would often stop and look back to see if it was being followed. However, when he finally reached the middle of the swamp without hearing or seeing anything of the deer he began to feel less confident of overtaking it. He feared that it was farther ahead of him than he had supposed. He stooped and examined the tracks with his fingers. They seemed to have just been made. Some of them were wet with the moisture which the feet of the deer had squeezed from the moss. The trail still showed that the buck was moving at a walk.

Running Fox was puzzled. He felt sure that he had traveled considerably faster than the deer, and yet he appeared to be no closer than when he first struck its trail. Still, the tracks indicated that it was but a trifling distance ahead of him.

"It is mysterious," Running Fox told himself.

However, he had no thought of abandoning the trail. Having crossed half of Sukelechen he felt quite sure that he would overtake the deer before he went much farther. He knew that the game trail ended in a large grassy swale at the border of the swamp, and if he missed the buck he hoped to find other game at that spot.

Running Fox hurried on, therefore, expecting each moment to come in sight of his game. He had reached the darkest and gloomiest part of Sukelechen. A dense stand of towering spruces hid the sky and shut out the sunlight. Perpetual twilight reigned beneath them. The great swamp was dark, and still, and lifeless. Black, ominous pools stood beside the trail, and the grass and ferns about their borders was brown and dead. The air was damp and cold, and tainted with the rank odor of decaying vegetation. A dead pine stood forth white and ghastly in the gloom, like a giant skeleton with arms spread in mute appeal. Long streamers of dry black moss hung from the limbs of the trees, and for a moment Running Fox wondered if they might not be the scalps of unfortunate persons who had ventured into that dreary abode of the Evil People.

The young Delaware suddenly felt the grip-

ping, mysterious spell of "the black place." It oppressed and stifled him. He looked anxiously about, expecting to see some of the strange creatures of which he had heard. The gloom, the quiet, and the lifelessness of the place awakened his superstitions. Imagination seized his mind. Each shadow became a lurking phantom, the slightest sound a stealthy footfall. The weird tales which his people told about Sukelechen suddenly became real. He began to feel that this dismal place really was inhabited by the evil monsters of whom he had heard. A wild superstitious fear entered his heart. He believed that the fierce inhabitants of "the black place" were about to cast some evil spell upon him. All sorts of alarming possibilities suggested themselves to his mind. He told himself that some evil monster might suddenly destroy his sight, or take away the power of his limbs or arms, or change him into a snake like ugly Sukachgook, the black racer, or even strike him dead in his tracks. He almost ran along the trail in his eagerness to escape from the swamp before one of those terrible fates overtook him.

Then Running Fox suddenly realized that he was afraid. It was the first time in his life. The realization was like a blow in his face. It brought him to a stand, and roused his fight-

ing blood. He raised his bow, and shook it defiantly at the somber black forest.

"Am I a woman?" he cried, scornfully. "Am I like Muschgingus, the rabbit, who runs from a shadow? Have the Evil People taken away my heart? No! No! They cannot frighten me. Listen, you Evil People. I have set out to do something. Now I am going ahead with it. Perhaps something bad will happen to me, but I am not afraid. See, I am going ahead. I have spoken."

Having made his boast, Running Fox continued boldly on the trail. He had taken only a few strides when he was startled by a great roar from the side of the trail. The next instant he laughed at his fears, as a grouse thundered away into the shadows.

"Hi, Popokus, you frightened me. I thought you were one of those Evil People," he cried.

Although he traveled at his best pace he failed to overtake the buck before it reached the border of the swamp. As he finally came in sight of the grassy swale which marked the western boundary of Sukelechen, he advanced with more caution. He hoped that the deer might have lingered at that spot to feed, and he made a careful reconnoissance from the timber before exposing himself to view. He saw a suspicious movement in a dense tangle of willows, which instantly aroused his interest.

"There is something hiding in there," he told himself.

Fitting an arrow to his bow, he stepped behind a tree to watch. With the exception of a few isolated clumps of low willows the swale was bare of cover, and as it was wet and marshy Running Fox scarcely believed that it was a spot which would tempt an enemy to choose it for a hiding place. He felt quite certain, therefore, that game of some sort lay concealed in the dense brush. Still he determined to take nothing for granted.

For a long time there was no further commotion in the bushes. Running Fox began to wonder if his eyes had fooled him. He refused to believe it. He was sure that he had seen a branch tremble as though something had moved against it.

"I will wait and see what comes of it," Running Fox declared.

Then he again saw some of the willows tremble significantly. This time he had no doubt about it. He felt sure that something was hiding in the brush.

"Yes, there is something over there," Running Fox assured himself. "I do not believe it is Ajapeu, the buck. Perhaps it is Machque, the bear. Perhaps it is one of the Evil People. Well, I am not afraid. I will stay here and watch until I find out about it."

The stand of willows was close beside the game trail, and Running Fox realized that unless the buck was in the cover, which he doubted, whatever was there must have concealed itself after the deer had passed. Then he realized that he was not certain that the buck had passed. Running Fox had turned from the trail within easy bow-shot from the edge of the swale, and he was not sure but that the buck, too, might have scented danger, and turned to avoid it. While he was thinking about it, there was another suspicious movement in the willows. A moment afterward Running Fox saw something rising to its feet. Then as he strained his eyes to identify it, a great lynx walked slowly from the cover.

"It is Nianque," murmured Running Fox.

He realized that the big cat had been lying beside the trail in the hope of surprising some passing deer. Having moved from its hiding place, it seemed in no hurry to depart. It stood for a moment or so looking intently along the game trail. Then it stretched its lithe, powerful body, and indulged in a yawn that brought a smile to the face of the interested young Delaware. The lynx was already within arrow-range, and Running Fox had no thought of allowing it to escape. It was one of the savage woods prowlers which caused sad havoc with the supply of game, and his people killed

it whenever the opportunity offered. Besides, a good lynx pelt was highly prized as an article of ornament, and as this specimen was unusually large Running Fox was eager to secure it as a trophy. However, he withheld his arrow hoping that the lynx might come still nearer. There was little wind, and, as it was in his favor, the young hunter had little fear of losing his prize. He continued to watch the lynx while it performed the familiar maneuvers of one awaking from heavy slumber. Running Fox believed that it had crept into the willows to watch for game and had dozed off under the influence of the warm autumn sunshine.

Having finally roused itself, however, the lynx showed little inclination to loiter. After it had sniffed daintily and catlike at the trail, it glanced nervously about the vicinity of its hiding place, and then turned to go. Realizing that it was not coming nearer, Running Fox released his arrow. He saw it strike, and heard a savage snarl from the lynx, which immediately bounded across the swale and disappeared into the timber. The lad looked after it in astonishment. Like the moose, it had apparently gone away unharmed. The discouraged young Delaware feared that Mauwallauwin had again brought failure upon his efforts.

"Well, I will go on, and find out about it," he said, grimly.

The lynx had left an easy blood trail, and Running Fox felt somewhat more hopeful. He believed that it had been badly wounded, and would soon succumb to its injuries. However, when he had gone several arrow-flights without coming upon it, he wondered if his experience with the moose was about to be repeated. Still the trail showed unmistakable signs that the big cat had been desperately wounded, and as he saw nothing of his arrow Running Fox continued to hope. He had determined to follow the lynx until he brought it to bay or drove it to cover. That seemed to be the only way in which he might overcome the spell of ill-fortune which had fallen upon him.

The trail led up a steep, brushy hillside, and as the cover was dense and difficult Running Fox proceeded with considerable caution. He knew that Nianque, like his big brother Quenischquney, the panther, was a bold and desperate fighter when wounded and brought to bay. Running Fox had seen more than one warrior proudly exhibit the scars which he had received in a desperate fight with a wounded lynx, and the young warrior himself had killed several of those great cats which had fought until their last gasp. He determined to be on his guard, therefore, as he believed that at any moment the lynx might spring from ambush and attack him.

"Nianque is strong, but his life is pouring out—he cannot go far," Running Fox assured himself.

Then he noted that the trail led toward a long rocky ledge near the summit of the ridge, and the truth quickly flashed into his mind. It was evident that the lynx was endeavoring to reach some favorite hiding place, or den, in the rocks where he might die safe from the hands of his pursuer. The thought caused Running Fox to abandon his caution, and hurry recklessly along the trail in the hope of overtaking the lynx before it reached the ledge. Once secure in its rocky lair, he knew that it would be difficult if not impossible to secure it. In spite of his exertions, however, the lynx reached its refuge before he came within bow-range.

There was little delay in locating the hiding place, as the trail led directly to the entrance. It was a round, tunnel-like hole which seemed to extend directly into the ledge. Running Fox stooped to examine it, and at once detected a strong body odor which led him to believe that the lynx had lived in the den for some time. Besides the fresh blood spots at the entrance, he saw a number of large paw-prints, and found several strands of long gray hair.

"Yes, Nianque lives in that place," Running Fox told himself. "He has been here a long time. Perhaps his people live here."

The Delaware sat before the entrance to the den for some time. He felt convinced that the lynx would never come out. To secure his trophy, therefore, he believed that it would be necessary to enter the den. He saw that it would be possible to crawl some distance into the opening, and he wondered how far into the ledge the dark, narrow passageway extended. There seemed only one way to find out, and he determined to explore it.

Holding his bow in one hand, and several arrows in the other, Running Fox wriggled forward into the mouth of the den. He found himself in a low narrow tunnel which seemed to extend straight into the ledge. However, after he had gone several times the length of his body, the walls of rock came closer together, and the light grew so dim that he could scarcely see a bow-length ahead of him. Then Running Fox stopped to listen. Not a murmur disturbed the stillness. He felt sure that the lynx was dead. He crawled forward several bow-lengths, and found himself in total darkness. He noticed, too, that the passageway had narrowed considerably, and he found himself in cramped quarters. He attempted to bring his bow into position, and found it impossible.

"That is bad," Running Fox told himself. "I must be cautious."

He realized that it would be foolhardy to ven-

ture farther along the tunnel with no means of defense. Besides, he was unable to see where he was going, and several alarming possibilities suggested themselves to his mind. The passageway might end on the brink of some deadly precipice, or there might be a deep pool hidden away in the darkness, or a loose bowlder might crash upon him. Running Fox was far too familiar with the perils of the wilderness to risk himself without taking the necessary precautions. He determined, therefore, to back from the tunnel, and provide himself with a torch.

However, when Running Fox attempted to wriggle backward he found himself wedged tightly between the rocky walls. For a moment he felt that he was fast in the powerful grip of one of the strange Underground People, who, the Delawares believed, inhabited those mysterious black caverns. The thought tried his courage. He believed that Nianque had led him into a trap, and he expected to be destroyed by some fierce monster whose stronghold he had invaded.

Then, as the moments passed and his life was spared, the truth suddenly flashed into his mind. He knew that he had dislodged a fragment of rock which had fallen into the tunnel beside him, and wedged him fast. He attempted to reach back and locate the obstruction, but was

unable to move his arms in the narrow passageway. Then he pushed, and wriggled, and struggled desperately to shove himself past the barrier, but only succeeded in wedging himself tighter than before.

"Well, there is only one thing to do," Running Fox told himself. "I will go ahead a little ways, and then I will try to back up and push this thing behind me."

He found it almost equally difficult to crawl forward, but after a desperate struggle he finally succeeded in freeing himself. Then, as he started forward, he heard a crash behind him, and he realized that the loosened rock had dropped into the tunnel. His heart sank at the thought. He believed that the way out had been closed, and he was trapped in the grim black passageway.

Once more Running Fox wriggled slowly backward until his feet struck the obstruction which blocked his way. He pushed desperately, and as it yielded slightly his heart filled with hope. His joy was short-lived, however, for the next effort found the rock wedged fast in the passageway. Then Running Fox attempted to wriggle over the top of it, but soon found the lower portion of his body wedged between the rock and the low roof of the tunnel. He was compelled to struggle fiercely to free himself.

"It is bad," he panted. "I am caught in a trap, like Timmeu, the wolf."

His exertions had sapped his strength, and he felt weak and helpless. The air in the tunnel suddenly grew hot and stifling, and he found himself panting for breath. For a long time he made no attempt to move.

Then a sound came from the darkness directly ahead of him. He raised his head, and listened. For some moments he heard nothing but the rapid beating of his heart. Then the challenge again sounded from the darkness. It was a low rumbling growl, and Running Fox knew that it came from fierce Nianque. He lay still, and peered anxiously before him. He knew that he was in a perilous predicament. If the lynx had been only slightly wounded he had little doubt that it would attack him, and there seemed little chance to defend himself. Unable to use his bow, he would be compelled to use his knife at close quarters. He attempted to draw it from the buckskin sheath at his belt, and succeeded only after many painful efforts.

In the meantime the savage growling continued. Once, Running Fox thought he saw the momentary flash of Nianque's eyes. He strained his ears to catch the sound of stealthy footfalls. Then, as the growling ceased, he again attempted to bring his bow into shooting position. The effort was useless, however, and

he realized that he must depend upon his knife. The thought was not reassuring. It meant that he could do nothing to protect himself until the lynx came within striking distance, and he knew that at such close range the odds would be greatly against him.

However, as time passed, and the lynx failed to attack him, Running Fox turned his thoughts upon escaping from the den. He wriggled backward, and strove desperately to dislodge the rock with his feet, but without success. Then realizing that he was exhausting himself, be abandoned his exertions.

For a long time Running Fox lay motionless, endeavoring to think of a way out of his predicament. There seemed to be slight chance of escape. For a moment the thought staggered him. He began to picture the horrors of a slow death from starvation and thirst locked up in the black depths of the hillside. The alarming possibility roused him to new efforts, and he struggled with the frenzy of despair. The result, however, was a failure. He wedged his body so tightly in the passageway that it required still greater exertions to free himself. The effort left him completely exhausted. His heart beat wildly against his ribs, his breath came in short, painful gasps, and his brain reeled. He believed that he was about to die.

"O Getanittowit, the Great One, take pity on

me," Running Fox murmured, weakly. "See what has happened to me. I am fast in a trap, like Timmeu, the wolf. The fierce Underground People have caught me. I have fought hard, but I cannot break away. Send me a vision so that I will know what to do. O Getanittowit, take pity on me."

Assuring himself that Getanittowit would help him, Running Fox again rallied his wits to plan a way of escape. He realized that it would be folly to renew his attempts to wriggle backward, and as there was no possibility of turning in the narrow tunnel, there seemed only one other alternative. He determined to crawl still farther along the passageway, in the hope of finding a wider cavern, or den, at the end of it.

"If Nianque lives in this place, he must have a place to sleep in," Running Fox reasoned. "I will keep going ahead until I find it. It is the only thing to do."

He had gone less than two bow-lengths when he was dismayed to find that the tunnel actually seemed to be growing narrower. He squeezed through, however, and was greatly relieved to learn that the passageway again grew wider. Then as he advanced cautiously into the darkness he found the sides of the tunnel drawing farther and farther apart. The roof, too, seemed higher, and Running Fox felt considerably encouraged.

"It is good," he said. "Getanittowit is helping me."

The next moment he again heard the same savage challenge from the darkness. Running Fox immediately stopped, and was overjoyed to learn that he had sufficient room to use his bow. It filled him with confidence, and he lost all fear of the big cat crouching somewhere in the darkness ahead of him.

"Hi, Nianque, now I am going to kill you," he cried, boldly, as he fixed an arrow to his bow and held it in readiness.

The growling ceased at the sound of his voice, and Running Fox listened anxiously to make sure that the lynx was not approaching. Then he reached back to his belt, and unfastened the buckskin case which contained his fire-drill and tinder. His prone position made it difficult to manipulate the fire-sticks, but after considerable effort he smelled the first faint odor of scorching wood. As it grew stronger he ceased his exertions, and carefully lowered his face to the little square of balsam which held the heated dust. He blew carefully until he saw a tiny red glow. He placed a bunch of dried grass upon it, and puffed it into a blaze. Then he placed several pieces of dry birch bark on the tiny flame. It flared up splendidly, and lighted the tunnel.

Running Fox saw that the passageway ended

in a circular den, or cave, less than a bow-length beyond him. Pushing his little fire before him, he crawled cautiously to the edge of the den. An angry snarl greeted him, and he saw the lynx crouching against the back of the cave. Running Fox advanced recklessly into the den, and found that he could rise to his knees. Then, carried away by the enthusiasm of the chase, he strung an arrow, and faced the enraged lynx.

"See, Nianque, I have found you," he cried, fiercely.

For a moment he studied the savage beast before him. It was a ferocious-looking object. Its eyes glowed with a weird greenish light, its broad ugly face was wrinkled with rage, and its lips were drawn back in an ugly snarl, disclosing its long white fangs. Running Fox saw a short piece of the arrow-shaft protruding from the flesh behind its shoulder. Then the lynx prepared to spring at him, and he shot his arrow.

The next instant the lynx leaped, and threw him upon his back. Abandoning his bow, Running Fox made good use of his sharp flint knife. He drove it deep behind the shoulder of the snarling lynx, and then plunged it far into its throat. At the same time he felt the sharp claws rip into the flesh of his arm and thigh. Then the lynx suddenly collapsed, and Running

Fox rose to his knees, and threw himselt upon its back. He drove his knife into the fatal spot behind the left shoulder, but the precaution was unnecessary for the lynx was already dead.

"Well, Nianque, you were very fierce, but I killed you," Running Fox cried, gleefully.

The little fire of bark had been scattered in the struggle, and Running Fox found himself in darkness. It took some time to find the square of balsam for his fire-drill. Once he recovered it, however, it was the work of only a few moments to start a new blaze. Then he took note of his wounds. They were not serious, one long shallow scratch on his arm, and an insignificant gash on his thigh.

Running Fox took time to skin the lynx, and then he left the den and crawled slowly along the tunnel, dragging the lynx pelt after him. He had made a number of tiny torches by splitting some of the larger pieces of bark, and binding them together with twisted strands of dried grass.

It was not long before he came to the slab of rock which had fallen into the passageway. He was able to examine it carefully in the light from his torch, and after some moments of strenuous efforts he succeeded in loosening it and pushing it along the tunnel ahead of him. Several times it stuck fast, and he had great difficulty in working it loose, but as the tunnel

widened perceptibly toward the entrance his progress steadily grew easier, until he finally reached the end of the passageway, and felt the cool, refreshing air of the forest on his face.

Night had already fallen, and Running Fox was astonished to learn that he had been so long in the cave. He was tired and weak, but his first thought was of joining Spotted Deer at the appointed rendezvous at the earliest possible moment. He felt sure that his friend would be greatly troubled at his absence, and he determined to relieve his mind without further delay.

The first gray streak of dawn was showing in the east when Running Fox eventually reached the meeting place. He stopped and gave the call of the little red owl. After he had repeated it three times he listened anxiously for an answer. For some moments the stillness was unbroken, and then he was surprised to hear Spotted Deer close at hand.

"It is good—you have come," said Spotted Deer.

CHAPTER V

THE WOUNDED ELK

Spotted Deer told Running Fox that he had hunted faithfully until sunset, but had failed to find game. He said that he saw many tracks, but all of them were several days old. Then, as he sat waiting for his friend at the appointed rendezvous, he had again heard the weird, mysterious call in the north.

"It sounded many times, and it was nearer," he told Running Fox.

"It is bad," Running Fox replied, solemnly. "Some Evil Spirit is driving away the game."

As Running Fox was quite exhausted, the lads rested until the sun was halfway across the sky. Then they roused themselves for a final attempt to secure game before they set out to rejoin their companions on the following day.

They decided to circle back toward the spot where they expected to meet the other members of their hunting party. They feared that they, too, had been equally unsuccessful, and Running Fox was filled with gloom at the thought of leading his friends to the Delaware

camp with nothing to show for their tireless efforts. It was the first time he had ever returned from a hunting expedition without game, and he felt positive that it would be a similar experience for the famous hunters who had accompanied him.

"I feel bad about this thing," he told Spotted Deer. "Our people will talk about it. They will say, 'Running Fox is a bad leader. He took away many great hunters, but he brought back no meat.' Black Panther, my father, will feel bad about those words."

"My brother, you must not feel bad about this thing," Spotted Deer replied, encouragingly. "You are a good leader. You have tried hard to find meat for our people. It is enough. We cannot kill what we do not find. Perhaps some of our friends have killed something. No, I do not believe that our people will talk against you."

Running Fox continued silent. The words of his friend failed to allay his anxiety. He knew that if the other hunting parties returned with a goodly supply of meat his own reputation and the reputations of his friends would be sure to suffer. He feared that the Delawares might even accept his failure as proof that it was he who had in some way earned the displeasure of Mauwallauwin. The possibility filled him with

dread. Then he was roused by a sudden exclamation from Spotted Deer.

"Allapi! Allapi! Listen! Listen!" Spotted Deer cried, excitedly.

They heard the clear, piercing tones of the elk call. It echoed in the frosty air, like the notes of a flute, and the lads thrilled at the sound. The elk appeared to be somewhere in a heavily wooded ravine a short distance to the eastward. As they listened the challenge was repeated, and their eyes flashed with enthusiasm.

"That is pretty music," declared Running Fox.

They immediately set out to find the elk. They knew that it was a full-grown bull, and they hoped that it might be the leader of a herd. As usual, therefore, they decided to separate and reconnoiter from opposite directions.

As the ringing notes continued, the eager young hunters hastened down the side of the ridge, and moved cautiously toward the sound. Running Fox advanced directly through the timber, while Spotted Deer circled to approach the elk from the opposite direction. Each prayed earnestly to Getanittowit, the Great One, for success. Running Fox especially realized the necessity of killing the elk, as he believed that if he returned with even a small amount of meat he might save his reputation as

a hunter. He took every precaution, therefore, hoping to get within easy bow-shot before the elk discovered him.

Having finally located the bull, Running Fox stopped to plan a way of approach. He moistened a finger and held it above his head to learn the direction of the wind. Then, choosing the route which offered the most shelter, he slipped through the woods as silently as a fox. It was not long before his sharp nose caught the scent of his game. He immediately stopped, and held an arrow in readiness. Then he listened. As he waited, the thrilling call rang out within bow-shot of him. Running Fox trembled with eagerness. The next moment he heard the elk moving about in the undergrowth. Was it approaching, or going away? Running Fox listened anxiously. He decided that it was moving slowly in his direction. Then he thought that he heard more than one animal stirring about in the dense cover. He wondered if he had come upon a herd. The possibility filled him with hope.

Soon afterward the bushes swayed directly in front of him, and a great antlered head appeared. Running Fox held his breath. Then the elk moved from cover, and the Delaware shot his arrow. It struck close behind the shoulder, and the bull wheeled and crashed into the undergrowth. Fitting an arrow to his bow,

Running Fox ran wildly in pursuit, while he shouted to warn Spotted Deer that the elk was running in that direction. At the sound of his voice, however, the bull stopped to look back. Running Fox saw his opportunity, and shot his second arrow. It struck close beside the first, and the elk grunted angrily and faced him. Then, as Running Fox reached for another arrow, the bull charged. It rushed directly toward him, and he realized that his life was in peril. As there was no time to string his arrow, he turned and ran for the nearest shelter. He saw two large bowlders standing a bow-length apart, and he jumped between them.

The elk rushed close up to the rocks, and Running Fox again reached for an arrow. Then he discovered that in his flight through the undergrowth the case of arrows had fallen from his back. The loss left him powerless. He gave way to utter despair, for he believed that once more the prize was about to slip from his grasp. The elk, however, showed no intention of retreating. Unable to reach him, it was snorting angrily, and pawing savagely at the ground. It was so close that Running Fox could almost touch it with his bow. He saw the threatening flash of its eyes, and distinctly heard it champing its teeth. Two arrows were buried deep behind its shoulder, and it seemed as if it must soon collapse. Still, as it showed

no signs of weakening, Running Fox feared each moment that it might turn, and make good its escape. Realizing that Spotted Deer might arrive in time to prevent the loss, Running Fox whooped diligently to bring him to the spot. In a few moments his signals were answered, and he knew that Spotted Deer was hurrying toward him. When the latter finally came within hailing distance he called out to learn the trouble.

"Mos has chased me into the rocks," shouted Running Fox. "I have dropped my arrows. Come over and kill him, but be careful. He is very mad."

"I am ready for him," Spotted Deer called back, reassuringly.

Soon afterward Running Fox heard him approaching through the undergrowth. The elk heard him, too, and peered suspiciously toward the sound. Then, as Spotted Deer came in sight, the bull rushed at him.

"Look out, he is coming!" warned Running Fox, as he ran out to recover his arrows.

Spotted Deer waited until the elk was almost upon him before he jumped nimbly aside. As the bull rushed past, the skillful young hunter drove an arrow into it at close range. The elk fell to its knees, and before it recovered Spotted Deer drove two more arrows into its body. Then he ran forward, and plunged his

knife into its throat. When Running Fox reached him the elk was dead.

"Well, my brother, you are a better hunter than I am," laughed Running Fox.

"No, Running Fox, you are the best hunter," Spotted Deer replied, loyally.

They searched carefully, hoping to find more elk, as Running Fox was quite certain that he had heard more than one. All they found, however, were the fresh tracks of the bull which they had just killed.

"Well, my ears must have fooled me," Running Fox declared, doubtfully.

The elk was a big bull in splendid condition, and the Delawares were delighted with their luck. They lost little time in removing the pelt, and cutting up the carcass. They selected the choicest meat, and packed as much as they could carry. Then they dug a hole and concealed the balance of the carcass until they could return for it.

"Now I will show you something," Spotted Deer said, quietly, when they had finished their task.

He started away in the direction from which he had come, and Running Fox followed him in silence. They went a considerable distance before Spotted Deer finally stopped before a large white birch.

"Look on the other side of that tree," he said.

Running Fox moved swiftly around the trunk, and saw that a good-sized slab of the outside bark had been freshly peeled from the tree. The inner layer of bark was marked with a number of strange figures and symbols. They had been drawn with a piece of bone or a sharpened stick, and the work appeared to have just been done. For some moments Running Fox studied the figures in silence.

"Well, my brother, what do you make of it?" Spotted Deer finally inquired.

"It is a message," replied Running Fox.

"Can you tell what it means?" asked Spotted Deer.

Running Fox moved his fingers over two rude figures which apparently were intended to represent human forms.

"Those are two hunters," he said, slowly. "They are carrying bows. They are in a swamp. Those marks standing up straight mean long grass which grows in the swamp. Here is the head of Mos, the great deer. There are two marks near it. They mean that those hunters saw two great deer. Here are arrows flying high. They show that nothing was killed. Here are the tracks of Mos running away. Here are the tracks of those hunters running after Mos. See, down here is a lodge and some

corn growing. It is the sign of our people. Spotted Deer, we are in danger. Some of our enemies are about. They saw us in that swamp trying to kill the great deer. They have left this here to tell their friends about it. Perhaps scouts are following us."

"Running Fox, I believe what you say is true," Spotted Deer replied, seriously. "Perhaps our enemies, the Mohawks, have come down here to look for meat. We must find our friends, and tell them about it."

"Yes, it is the best thing to do," agreed Running Fox.

As the day was far advanced they saw little possibility of getting in touch with their comrades before the following day. However, they determined to set out without further delay, and they continued to travel well into the night. When they finally stopped to rest they feared to make a fire lest they might be found by sharp-eyed scouts who might have followed them.

The night was cold and blustery, and the Delawares crept into the tangled top of a fallen pine to shelter themselves from the biting blasts of the wind. The discovery of the mysterious warning on the white birch made them cautious, and they determined to remain awake until they felt sure that there were no foes prowling about in the vicinity.

However, as they heard nothing to arouse their suspicions they finally ceased watching and prepared to sleep. It was not long before Running Fox suddenly awakened, and sat up to listen. He felt quite certain that he had heard something, and yet he was not sure that he had not been dreaming. For some moments he heard only the wind moaning through the tree-tops. Then he heard the call of the great horned owl. He listened anxiously as it came faintly out of the north. It sounded perfectly natural, and still Running Fox was suspicious. He knew from experience that it was a favorite signal of his foes, the Mohawks, and as the present call came from the vicinity where he and Spotted Deer had killed the elk he determined to be on his guard. A few moments later, therefore, when he heard the call repeated from farther to the west, his suspicions were strengthened. He feared that a company of Mohawk scouts had found his trail, and were communicating the discovery to some of their tribesmen. He determined to awaken Spotted Deer.

"What is it?" Spotted Deer asked, excitedly, as he reached for his weapons.

"Allapi, listen," cautioned Running Fox.

It was some moments before they heard anything. Then the familiar notes again sounded

from the north. They were repeated twice in quick succession, and then all was silent.

"That is only the big night bird," said Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," replied Running Fox. "Perhaps it is something different. We must be sure."

Then the call was again answered from the west, and the sharp-eared young Delawares instantly detected its falsity. It had been uttered too rapidly, and the tone was too high. They were fully convinced that it was a counterfeit.

"Well, my brother, how do you feel about it now?" inquired Running Fox.

"There is something wrong about it," replied Spotted Deer.

They listened a long time, but the call seemed to have ceased. The Delawares felt sure, however, that a company of their foes were scouting through the wilderness in search of them. The thought caused them considerable anxiety, and they determined to find their comrades at the earliest possible moment.

CHAPTER VI

A FOREST FIRE

At daylight the Delawares set out to rejoin their comrades. They determined to waste no time in hunting, as they feared that their enemies might be following swiftly on their trail.

"We must travel fast until we find our friends," said Running Fox.

Shortly after midday, however, they saw something which brought them to a sudden stop. A great mass of yellow smoke rose above a low ridge to the westward. They knew at once that it came from a forest fire, and they watched it with considerable uneasiness.

"Tindey, the Fire Monster, is eating up the woods," said Running Fox.

The forest was dry and inflammable, and as a strong wind blew from the west the lads realized that the fire was sweeping directly toward them. It worried them. They were still a considerable distance from the place where they expected to meet their friends, and they feared that the fire would drive them from their course before they reached the rendezvous.

"It is bad," said Spotted Deer, as they hur-

ried on. "Tindey will drive us away from our friends."

"I believe our enemies have done this thing," Running Fox declared, savagely.

It was not long before they saw unmistakable evidence that the fire was moving swiftly upon them. A thin, purplish mist obscured the sun, the air was heavy with the odor of burning pine, and a weird yellow haze filled the woods. They realized that each moment was precious, and they hurried along at top speed.

"Tindey travels fast," said Running Fox.

"Yes. Perhaps he will chase away our friends before we can find them," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," Running Fox replied, soberly.

However, he showed no intention of turning back. He believed that his responsibility as leader of the hunting party required him to make every effort to obey the order which he had issued to his comrades. He, too, began to fear that his tribesmen would be forced to flee from the rendezvous before he arrived, but he determined to continue toward the meeting place.

"We must keep going ahead," he told Spotted Deer.

"I will follow you," Spotted Deer replied, quietly.

In the meantime the wind had increased in

strength, and it was apparent that the fire was reaching great proportions. Dense clouds of smoke rolled up out of the west, and it seemed as if the fire was about to rush over the top of the ridge. Before it was a dense forest of pitch pines, and the Delawares knew that once in that heavy stand of inflammable timber it would sweep forward with the irresistible violence of a tornado. They also knew that they should turn and flee for safety. They realized that each moment they delayed weakened their chance of escape, and yet neither of them suggested retreating. Their goal was now but a short distance ahead of them, and they determined to risk their lives to make good their pledge to their friends.

"This is bad," panted Running Fox, as they ran through the smoky woods. "We must watch out or Tindey will catch us."

"I believe it will be hard to get away," Spotted Deer replied, grimly.

The smoke had become so dense that they could scarcely see a bow-length in front of them. Great black cinders began to drop down through the trees. A fox ran wildly across their path. Several grouse thundered by close to their heads. Then they heard a great roar, and as they turned their eyes toward the west they saw an immense wall of flame leap up from the top of the ridge.

"Run! Run!" cried Running Fox, as he dropped the load of meat from his back.

Spotted Deer also freed himself from his burden. They scrambled wildly up the side of a rocky hill, and stared anxiously through the smoke to find the dead pine which marked the spot where they had agreed to meet their friends. Precious moments passed while they searched for it. In the meantime the fire roared down the side of the ridge, and swept on into the vast pine forest. Suffocating clouds of black smoke rolled into the sky as the trees burst into flame. Great sheets of fire spread from tree-top to tree-top as the wind urged Tindey forward on his career of destruction.

Running Fox suddenly stopped, and uttered the call of the barred owl. It was almost drowned by the noise of the fire, and he had little hope of receiving an answer. He listened anxiously for a reply. Then, when he failed to hear it, he threw back his head and gave the wild, ringing war-cry of his people. It rose defiantly above the sullen roar of Tindey, and was carried away by Linchen, the west wind.

"If any of our friends are near they will hear that," Spotted Deer said, hopefully.

The next moment an answer sounded within bow-shot of them. Calling to their comrades to wait, the lads rushed wildly through the smoke

to find them. They found only two, Painted Hawk and Yellow Wolf, awaiting them.

"You have come—it is good," Yellow Wolf said, quietly.

"Where are our brothers?" Running Fox demanded, excitedly.

"We have not seen them," replied Painted Hawk. "Perhaps Tindey has caught them."

"Well, we must not wait here any longer," declared Running Fox. "Tindey is almost upon us. Come, my brothers, we must try to get away."

They scrambled frantically down the rocky hillside, and fled toward the east. The country was rough and difficult, and they realized that the fire would soon overtake them unless they speedily found some haven of refuge. Running Fox recalled a small marshy swale which he had encountered on one of his former hunting expeditions in that vicinity, and he determined to try to find it. He believed it offered their only chance of escape.

They heard the fire raging behind them, and they knew that they were racing for their lives. The woods were choked with dense clouds of smoke which blinded and stifled them. Running Fox realized that it would be a waste of valuable time to attempt to search for familiar landmarks. He determined to trust entirely to his keenly developed sense of direction to lead

him to the little strip of marsh which he knew was somewhere in the general vicinity. It seemed like a desperate chance, but his comrades followed him with blind confidence.

"Hurry! Hurry!" cried Running Fox, as they plunged across a bushy ravine. "I know this place. Pretty soon we will come to the wet place. It is straight ahead of us."

He raced ahead like Timmeu, the wolf, on the trail of a deer. His companions followed him with fresh hopes. The fire, however, was rapidly overtaking them. They heard it raging through the timber close behind them, and they knew that unless they soon found the marshy swale nothing could save them. Running Fox was peering anxiously about him in an effort to pierce the heavy pall of smoke, and locate some familiar feature which might guide him to his goal. He suddenly stopped at the base of a giant pine. Then he began to circle the tree, and closely examine the bark. The others watched him in silence.

"See!" cried Running Fox, pointing to the tree. "There are the old marks of Machque, the bear. I know this tree. We have passed the wet place. This tree is beyond it."

His companions looked at him in dismay. Hope suddenly died in their hearts. They believed that they were lost. Tindey, the great

Fire Monster, was roaring down upon them, and they saw no way of escape.

"Come! Come!" cried Running Fox. "Run close behind me. I will lead you to the wet place."

Once more they followed him in a wild flight through the smoky woods. This time he ran almost directly toward the approaching fire, and his friends wondered if he had suddenly lost his sense of direction. They made no protest, however, for he was their leader, and they still had implicit confidence in his ability.

"This way! This way!" shouted Running Fox, as he suddenly turned in his course.

Within an arrow-flight they floundered into the shallow, stagnant water of the little swale. It was less than a bow-shot in diameter, and was surrounded on all sides by a dense stand of pitch pines. A heavy fringe of bushes grew along its borders. It seemed like a small and insecure refuge from the great Fire Demon, but the Delawares were glad to accept whatever protection it might offer them.

"Tindey cannot reach us here," Running Fox assured them.

"Tindey has long arms," Yellow Wolf warned him.

Then, as the fire was almost upon them, they retreated to the center of the swale, and waited calmly to learn their fate. The wind had risen

to a gale, and the flames were fanned to gigantic proportions. They roared through the timber with the sound of thunder, and left a dreary blackened waste behind them. Each moment the smoke pall grew more dense, and the Delawares soon found themselves coughing, and gasping for breath. They began to fear that if they were not roasted by the awful heat from the flames they would be suffocated by the smoke.

"Lie down! Lie down! Tindey is trying to choke us," cried Running Fox, as he dropped face downward in the shallow pool.

The others immediately followed his suggestion. Then the great conflagration swept upon them. It seemed as if the entire universe had suddenly leaped into flame. They saw it bursting from the undergrowth, sweeping through space, and leaping to the tops of the tallest trees. It roared, and hissed, and crackled, and shriveled the earth with its hot, blistering breath. The Delawares crouched close together, and looked with wild, startled eyes as Tindey raged about their refuge. In a moment they were completely surrounded by a great wall of fire. It swept to the edge of the little pool, and reached hungrily across the water with its long red fingers. The Delawares twisted and writhed in agony as terrific blasts of heat swept over them. The shallow pool

suddenly seemed to turn to flame. Huge black billows of smoke shut out the daylight. Great showers of glowing embers fell from the sky. A dry bush in the middle of the swale started into flame, and Running Fox crushed it to the water. A flaming pine crashed down within bow-shot of the crouching Delawares. Sparks lighted in their hair, and burned deeply into their flesh. They realized that it would be only a matter of moments before they must succumb.

"I am burning up!" cried Yellow Wolf.

He rose unsteadily to his feet, and would have rushed wildly into the flames, but his friends seized him and dragged him down. Then for long, torturing moments they lay with their faces close to the water, gasping for the scant supply of air that still lingered above the pool. While they fought to keep alive, the heat gradually subsided, the long, threatening red fingers withdrew from the edge of the pool, and the embers ceased to drop into the water. However, it was some time before the Delawares fully realized that the fire had actually passed. Then they raised their heads, and saw it sweeping away toward the eastward.

"Tindey has gone—we are alive—it is good," said Running Fox.

"You are a great leader; you have given us our lives," replied Painted Hawk.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUNGER MOON

For a long time the Delawares sat in gloomy silence, watching the great fire rage on its mad career of destruction. They were alone in a dreary scene of lifeless desolation. They looked about them in despair. The fragrant green forest had suddenly been changed into a parched brown waste of scorched trees. The vegetation had been shriveled to ashes, and the earth itself seemed to have been burned to cinders. Except themselves, not a living thing remained in the wake of the flames. Like a great plague, the fire had swept through the wilderness, and left it bare and lifeless.

"Tindey has killed everything," Yellow Wolf said, sadly. "He has sucked the blood from our brother, Pindalanak, the pine. He has eaten up all the growing things. He has smothered our brothers, the little Underground People. He has driven away Achtu, the deer, and Popokus, the partridge. There is nothing left to hunt. There is nothing left to eat. He has dried up the pools of sweet water. Everything is dead. See, Haki, our mother, the earth, has covered

her face with ashes. She is crying for her children. It is bad."

"Yes, my brother, it is bad," Running Fox replied, soberly.

The day was drawing to a close, and the Delawares determined to spend the night in the swale. The wilderness was still hot and smoking, and here and there burning pines blazed forth like grim sentinels left behind by Tindey to guard his trail. The sun had disappeared into a weird red haze, and the sky was streaked with smoke. Great banks of it rolled up out of the east, as Tindey roared onward into the dusk.

As night finally closed upon them, the Delawares made their way to a narrow strip of marsh at the edge of the swale. It was a wet and uncomfortable camp-site, but they determined to make the best of it. They found a few small spruces which the marsh had saved from the flames, and they uprooted them and spread the dense feathery branches upon the moss to provide a dry couch. Then they gathered some willow branches, and made a fire. Yellow Wolf and Painted Hawk had retained a small supply of meat, and they broiled it before the tiny flame. They ate in gloomy silence, for their hearts were heavy, and their minds were filled with all sorts of alarming premonitions about their people.

"Yellow Wolf, do you know what has become of our friends?" Running Fox inquired, after they had finished eating.

"No, my brother, I do not know anything about it," Yellow Wolf replied, gravely. "When we went away from you to find game we did not hear any more of them. I hunted hard with my brother, Painted Hawk, but we did not find anything for a long time. Then we found an elk. It was a very old cow. There was not much meat on it, but we killed it. That is all we found. Then it came time to meet you, and we went to that place to meet you. As we were going there we saw smoke. Then we knew that Tindey was coming, and we traveled fast. Well, we reached that place, but no one was there. Then we waited, and you came. Perhaps our friends could not come to meet us. Perhaps Tindey chased them away. Perhaps they were burned up. I do not like to talk about it. My heart is heavy. I cannot tell you anything more."

When Yellow Wolf finished speaking his comrades remained silent. The strange disappearance of their friends filled them with gloom. They feared that all of them might not have escaped. They felt equally anxious about the fate of the Delaware camp. They wondered if the fire had extended that far. If it had, they feared that with only the old men, and the

women and children available for its defense the village had been destroyed. They grew weak at the thought.

"My friends, I feel bad in my heart," said Running Fox. "I am thinking about my friends. I do not know what has happened to them. I am also thinking about the old people, and the women and children whom we left behind. Perhaps Tindey has destroyed them. How did Tindey come here? I will tell you, my friends. I believe that our enemies sent him. It makes me hot inside. I want to go and fight. But first we must find out what has happened to our people."

"Running Fox speaks good words," declared Painted Hawk. "He is a brave warrior, and a good leader. I believe what he tells us is true. Yes, I believe that our enemies sent the fierce Fire Monster upon us."

"Did you see anything of our enemies?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"No, we did not see anything of them, but I believe they did this thing," replied Painted Hawk.

"Well, my friends, I will tell you something," said Running Fox.

Then he told Yellow Wolf and Painted Hawk about the mysterious symbols which Spotted Deer had discovered on the white birch. He also told them about the suspicious owl calls

which he and Spotted Deer had heard during the night. The story greatly impressed the two Delaware hunters.

"Now I know that our enemies sent Tindey against us," Yellow Wolf cried, angrily. "They sent him here to burn our lodges and drive away the game."

"Who do you believe did this thing?" inquired Running Fox.

"I cannot tell you that," replied Yellow Wolf. "Perhaps it was the Shawnees. Perhaps it was the Mohawks."

"My friends, I believe it was the——"

Painted Hawk suddenly ceased speaking, and raised his hand as a warning to silence. The weird, piercing cry which had haunted Running Fox and Spotted Deer again sounded from the north. It echoed dismally through the lifeless forest, like the wails of one in agony, and the Delawares listened in superstitious fear.

"What was it?" whispered Painted Hawk, when the call finally ceased.

"It is something mysterious," declared Yellow Wolf. "It was not the cry of fierce Quenischquney, the panther. It was not the cry of Nianque, the lynx. It sounded something like Timmeu, the wolf, but it was different. It was not the great night bird. I do not know what it was. I believe it was one of the Evil People."

"My friends, when I was hunting for meat with my brother Spotted Deer we heard that cry," Running Fox told them. "It always came from the Cold Place. I do not like to hear it. I, too, believe it is one of the Evil People. I believe it is a bad sign."

"We will listen, perhaps it will come again," said Painted Hawk.

The little camp-fire had already burned out, and the Delawares made no attempt to find a fresh supply of fuel. They sat close together in the darkness, and watched the flickering glow in the eastern sky. The air was heavy with the odor of charred wood, and in every direction they saw the glow from burning stumps. The heavens were dark and starless, and it seemed as if they, too, had been scorched and blackened by the long red fingers of Tindey, the Fire Monster.

The marsh was cold and wet, and the Delawares spent a dreary night watching for daylight. They found it impossible to sleep, as their eyes were inflamed and sore, and their bodies were scorched and blistered. Their minds, too, were sick with alarm for the safety of their people. They were troubled and fearful, and their one desire was to reach the Delaware camp at the earliest possible moment, and learn if their fears were true.

"Come, my friends, we will go to our peo-

ple," Running Fox told them, as the first gray light showed in the east.

They immediately left the swale, and filed away through the grim black forest. On all sides were evidences of the ruin which Tindey, the fierce Fire Monster, had wrought. The Delawares looked about them with sad, troubled eyes. The great hunting ground which had been the pride of their people was now a barren waste. They believed that it meant disaster for their tribe. They feared that the bright, happy days of plenty had passed, and privation and want were at hand.

"When I look at this my heart is heavy, and I am like an old man," said Spotted Deer.

"It is bad," Running Fox replied, gloomily.

They were less than a full day's journey from the Delaware camp, and they hurried toward it at top speed. Columns of smoke showed faintly against the sky far to the eastward, and they knew that the fire was still sweeping through the wilderness. They climbed to the top of each ridge, and eagerly scanned the country ahead of them, hoping to see the end of the dreary waste through which they were traveling. Each time, however, they were disappointed. The thick stand of timber was burned as far as they could see. Their hopes began to fail. They feared to come in sight of the Delaware camp, for they dreaded to think what

they might find. Then later in the day they reached the river which flowed past the Delaware village. They saw that the fire had begun at the water's edge, and the woods on the opposite shore were unburned.

"See!" cried Running Fox. "Now we know that our enemies have done this thing."

They raced on with hearts full of fear. It was evident that some crafty foe had determined to destroy both the Delaware camp, and the Delaware hunting grounds, and it seemed as if the treacherous plan had succeeded.

"Well, we will soon know about it," declared Running Fox, as he led his companions at a furious pace.

Then, when the day was two-thirds gone, they came in sight of the Delaware camp-site. They looked with bated breath. Then they saw the lodges. They saw smoke rising slowly from the center of the camp. The village was intact. Their people were safe. They laughed with boyish glee.

"It is good," Running Fox cried, joyfully. "Getanittowit has helped our people. They have chased away Tindey, the Fire Monster."

They hurried along the top of the ridge until they were opposite the camp. Then they stopped, and looked with delight upon the peaceful village beside the river. The ground on all sides of it was black and fire-scarred,

and it was apparent that the Delawares had set a back-fire to protect the camp. The four hunters on the mountain-top united their voices in a ringing shout of victory. As it rang over the valley, and echoed shrilly between the hills, the Delawares ran from the lodges and rushed to the edge of the camp. The hunters shouted again, and waved their arms. Then the people looked toward the mountain-top, and saw them silhouetted against the sky, and a mighty shout of welcome rose from the village.

"Come, my brothers, our people are waiting for us," cried Running Fox, as he hastened down the mountain-side.

The Delawares met them at the edge of the camp, and escorted them into the village in triumph. Running Fox saw that all of the other hunters seemed to have reached the village in safety. Five of the men who had accompanied him came forward to greet him. He saw meat broiling over the fires, and he knew that some of the hunters had found game. Then a woman suddenly rushed to his side, and looked closely into his face with wild, frightened eyes.

"Where is Dancing Owl? Where is my son?" she cried.

Running Fox suddenly realized that only nine of his own company had returned. Dancing Owl, the famous young warrior who had surprised and killed the Mohawk scouts whom he

had found prowling about the Delaware camp, was missing. Running Fox looked steadily into the troubled eyes of the frantic mother.

"My friend, you have asked me what has happened to your son," he said, quietly. "I do not know what has become of him. We separated to find meat. I went away with my brother, Spotted Deer. Dancing Owl went away with Laughing Beaver. Perhaps Laughing Beaver can tell you about him."

"No, I do not know what became of him" declared Laughing Beaver. "We separated to find game. When it came time to meet, I waited a long time, but Dancing Owl did not come. Then I looked hard to find him. Then the great fire came, and chased me away. I circled around and came here. I did not find him here. I feel bad in my heart. Dancing Owl is my friend."

The woman turned away with bowed head, and Running Fox looked after her with sympathetic eyes. Then he hurried away to find his father. Black Panther met him at the entrance to his lodge.

"My son, you have come—it is good," said the famous Delaware war-chief.

"I have brought no meat," Running Fox replied, gloomily.

"Only Big Elk and his hunters brought meat," Black Panther told him. "All of the

other hunters came with empty hands. It is bad. Bad days have come upon us."

"Did Big Elk find much game?" Running Fox inquired, eagerly.

"No, they killed only two small elk, and one was very thin," said Black Panther.

He told Running Fox that with the exception of Big Elk and his companions, who had hunted toward the south, the hunting parties had returned without meat. Then the great fire had threatened the camp. Then Dancing Owl had failed to meet his companions. Black Panther said that all those misfortunes had frightened and disheartened the people. He declared that some Evil Spirit was working against them.

"My heart is heavy about Dancing Owl," said Running Fox. "Something bad must have happened to him."

"Perhaps Tindey caught him," replied Black Panther.

At that moment old Sky Dog, the medicine-man, entered the lodge. He stopped when he saw Running Fox, and tried to identify him in the failing light.

"It is Running Fox," Black Panther told him.

"Well, young man, did you bring us any meat?" Sky Dog inquired, peevishly.

"No, I did not bring any meat," replied Running Fox.

"It is bad. It is bad," croaked the aged medicine-man. "The Cold Time is almost here, and we have nothing to eat. We have sent our best hunters into the forest, and they could find no game. Mauwallauwin has turned against us. I warned you about it. Now it has come to pass. We shall starve. Pretty soon we shall all die. Wingewochqueu, the raven, and Timmeu, the wolf, will pick our bones."

"Those are bad words," Black Panther said, sharply. "You are a great Medicine Person. You must do something to help us."

"Well, I will try to do something good," replied Sky Dog. "When the next sun comes send the hunters across the water, and I will try to help them."

"It is good," declared Black Panther. "I will do as you tell me to do."

The following day the hunters crossed the river, and hunted far back among the hills. At night they returned with a deer as the sole result of the hunt. They went again the next day, and returned with a few grouse and squirrels. The third day they brought nothing.

Then Black Panther sent criers through the camp to call the people together in council to discuss what should be done. They gathered in the great council lodge with gloomy hearts. Even the women and children were admitted

for the calamity which had come upon them menaced all alike.

"My people, bad days have come upon us," said Black Panther. "Our hunters can find no game. Our enemies have burned our hunting grounds. One of our brave young men has disappeared. Lowan, the time of cold, is almost upon us. We have little to eat. Pretty soon we shall have nothing. Something must be done. We cannot starve in our lodges, like Muschgingus, the rabbit. Now I will ask Sky Dog to give you some words. He is a great Medicine Person. Perhaps he can tell us what to do. I have spoken."

"Delawares, what I warned you about has come to pass," cried the old medicine-man. "Mauwallauwin has turned against us. Getanittowit, the Great One, has closed his ears against our words. I have done big things, but some great Evil Person is against me. Listen! Do you hear fierce Lowanachen blowing from the Cold Place? Pretty soon Lowan will cover the earth with his great white robe. Then the old people will die. The women and children will cry for meat to keep them warm. There will be none to give them."

As Sky Dog paused for breath, a long, mournful wail rang through the camp. The Delawares turned to one another in alarm. The medicine-man stood rigid. Running Fox and Spotted

Deer exchanged glances. It was the same mysterious call from the north. Twice it echoed through the camp, and then it ceased.

"Listen, my people, did you hear that cry?" Sky Dog shouted, excitedly. "Some of you know it. Most of you have never heard it. It means great disaster. It is the voice of the great White Wolf. He is a mysterious Medicine Creature. He is one of the fierce Evil People. He has come here to drive away the game. He will bring great trouble upon us. We must move the camp. If we remain here we shall starve."

"Tell us about this strange Medicine Creature," cried the superstitious Delawares.

"Yes, yes, tell us about it," urged Black Panther.

"Well, my people, I will tell you about it," agreed Sky Dog. "But first I must light the Medicine Pipe and fill the lodge with smoke to keep out the fierce Medicine Wolf."

The Delawares waited in great suspense while Sky Dog filled the Medicine Pipe with sacred herbs, and puffed the smoke toward the door of the lodge. Then he passed the pipe to Black Panther. After the chief had smoked, Sky Dog held the pipe before him for protection against the evil influence of the mysterious white Medicine Wolf while he related the ancient legend to his people.

CHAPTER VIII

SKY DOG TELLS A STORY

"My friends, I am about to tell you of something which happened long, long ago," began the aged medicine-man. "It happened before I was alive. It happened before my father was alive. It happened before my grandfather was alive. Now you see that it was a very long time ago. Our people have told it to one another from the time when the first Lenapes began to live. It is a great Medicine Story, and it can be told only by a Medicine Person. That is why I am about to tell it to you. Now I will tell you about it.

"A long time ago the Lenapes and the wolves smoked the pipe, and agreed to live in peace. For a long time they had been fighting each other, but now they agreed to put away their weapons and live as brothers. They held a great council. It was a wonderful thing, my friends, and a great many people came together. Our brothers, the Lenapes, sat behind their chiefs on one side of the fire, and the wolves sat behind their leader on the other side of the fire. The leader of the wolves was the great white

Medicine Wolf which I am going to tell you about.

"The great Lenape chiefs made speeches, and told the wolves that their hearts were friendly, and called the wolves their brothers. Then the great white Medicine Wolf told the Lenapes that he was glad to hear their words. He said that the hearts of the wolves were good toward the Lenapes. He called them his brothers, and agreed to live at peace with them. Then the Lenapes sang good songs, and danced joyfully to show that their hearts were friendly toward their new brothers, the wolves. After that the wolves leaped around, and howled to show that their hearts were good toward the Lenapes.

"The council continued many days, and the Lenape hunters went into the forest and killed much meat which they gave to their brothers, the wolves. Then the great white Medicine Wolf told the Lenapes to wait while he and his people went away into the forest. They were gone a long time. Then the Lenapes heard them coming back. Pretty soon they came in sight. They brought birds, and rabbits, and fish, and gave them to their brothers, the Lenapes. There was much to eat, and the Lenapes and the wolves began a great feast which continued many days. There was much dancing and singing, and all sorts of games, and races between the Lenapes and the wolves.

"Then when they finally ate up all of the food, and the people began to grow tired, they decided to separate and go to their villages. They held another great council. The Lenapes sat on one side, and the wolves on the other side. The greatest Lenape war-chief, and the great white Medicine Wolf sat beside each other in the center of the council circle. They lighted the pipe, and first the Lenape puffed smoke over the wolf, and then the wolf puffed smoke over the Lenape. The Lenape chief made a talk and promised to protect the wolf and his people, and invited the wolves to go to the Lenape camp. Then the Medicine Wolf made a speech and promised to help the Lenapes. He said that his people would drive game to the Lenape village, and would always give the Lenapes warning when their enemies came near them. Then the Lenapes shouted, and danced around the wolves, and the wolves howled, and danced around the Lenapes. After that all the people went home.

"For a long time after that great council the Lenapes and the wolves lived at peace. When the Lenapes went on the war-trail the wolves always followed them. At night they would howl to let the Lenapes know that they were guarding them as they had promised to do. When the Cold Time came, and it was hard to find game, the wolves would chase elk and deer

near the Lenape camp, so that their brothers might have plenty to eat. When the Lenapes killed game they always left some meat for their brothers the wolves. Whenever a Lenape and a wolf met in the forest they would stop, and greet each other as brothers. Sometimes the wolves would call the Lenape hunters, and when the Lenapes went to them they always found meat. So they lived happily together for a very long time.

"Then, one day when the great white robe was heavy upon the earth, Spotted Fawn, the little daughter of Fighting Elk, a great Lenape warrior, wandered away from the village. Fighting Elk thought much of his daughter, and when he heard that she had strayed away his heart grew heavy. He called some of his friends, and led them away on her trail which was easy to follow in the great white robe. The little footprints finally led them to the top of a large rock by the side of some swift water. The trail ended on the rock, and all about it were the fresh tracks of the great gray wolves.

" 'See,' shouted Fighting Elk, 'the wolves have eaten Spotted Fawn. I am going to war. I will kill every wolf I see.'

"His friends tried to quiet him, but he would not hear them. They told him that Spotted Fawn might have slipped from the rock, and fallen into the water. They told him that the

wolves might have followed the trail to find the child, and bring her back to the Lenape village.

"'No, no, it is not so,' cried Fighting Elk. 'The wolves have eaten my daughter, and I will kill them.'

"His friends thought different about it. They hunted along the sides of the stream for some time, hoping to find the body of Spotted Fawn. When they could not find it, Fighting Elk left them and hurried to the village to tell the Lenapes what he had seen. He made a strong talk against the wolves, and the people believed his words. They began to dance and prepare to go to war against the wolves. Then some of the old men made talks, and asked the Lenapes to wait until they heard what the wolves had to say about it.

"'No! No!' shouted the warriors. 'The wolves have killed Spotted Fawn, and now we are going out to destroy them.'

"Well, my friends, the next time the wolves chased game near the Lenape camp the warriors ran out and killed some of the wolves. The great White Wolf was not with those wolves, and the Lenapes wondered what he would do when he heard what they had done to his people.

"In a few days the wolves gathered around the Lenape village and yelped and howled for war. There were a great many of them, and

above all the others could be heard the cry of the big white leader. It frightened the women and children, and made the old men shake their heads. The wolves kept howling around the camp for many days, but they always came when it was dark, and the people could not see them.

"Then Fighting Elk said he would go out, and kill the great white Medicine Wolf. His friends told him that it would be very foolish to go out alone in the darkness, but he would not listen to their words. Soon after he left the camp the people heard the cry of the Medicine Wolf close by, and they knew that he was coming to meet Fighting Elk. Then they listened a long time, but the wolves were still. Then Fighting Elk gave the great Lenape war-cry far away in the darkness.

" 'He has killed the Medicine Wolf!' the Lenapes shouted.

"When it grew light Fighting Elk staggered into the village. He was bloody, and weak from many wounds. He threw the body of a great she-wolf to the ground, and then he fell exhausted. The Lenapes saw that one half of the wolf was white, and the other half gray.

" 'It is the mate of the White Wolf,' they told one another.

" 'Something bad will come of this,' declared the old men.

"The Lenapes washed the wounds of Fighting Elk, and then they asked him to tell about his fight with the wolves. He could not talk. He seemed like one in a dream. He pointed to the dead wolf, and then pointed above to the little lights in the sky. He remained like that for many days.

"'The White Wolf has made him foolish,' declared his friends.

"Then the wolves came again, and howled around the camp, and the cry of the great white leader always sounded above all the others. When Fighting Elk heard it he would cry and tremble, and show his teeth. The people were afraid of him. They called the medicine-man to drive the evil spirits from Fighting Elk, but he could not help him.

"Well, my friends, the wolves had stopped chasing game to the camp, and the Lenapes had to go out and hunt. They hunted hard for many days, but they could not find a track. Then they knew that the wolves were driving away the game.

"Fighting Elk sat by himself, mumbling and whining. When the wolves howled around the village he would tremble, and cry, and the women and children would run away from him. Then one time the cry of the great White Wolf sounded at the edge of the village, and Fighting Elk gave a loud shout and rushed away into

the darkness. Some of his friends ran after him to bring him back, but the White Wolf and his warriors drove them into the camp. My friends, Fighting Elk was never seen again.

"Then for many days the Lenapes hunted through the forest, but they found no game. The dried meat was gone. The people were starving. The boys hunted in the woods near the camp, and brought in some squirrels and a few small birds. The women made them into a stew, and were so hungry that they could not wait until they were cooked. There was only enough for the women and children, and the bones were cracked and given to the old men who sucked the soft meat out of them.

"Then the Lenape war-chief called a council. He told the people that the powerful Medicine Wolf had sent all this trouble upon them.

" 'We must move the camp to some other place or we shall starve,' said the Lenape chief.

"The people agreed that it was the only thing to do. Then the chief selected the best scouts, and divided them into four companies. He sent them away in different directions to find new hunting grounds. The scouts went away as soon as it was light. One company traveled toward Wapaneu, the place where day begins. One went toward Schawaneu, the home of the warm wind. One went toward Wundschenneu, the place where the sun disappears. One went

toward Lowaneu, the Cold Place. As they left the camp the cry of the great White Wolf sounded close by, and the old men shook their heads. 'It is bad,' they told one another.

"Well, my friends, the warriors who stayed behind hunted in the woods every day to find food for the women and children. One day they heard the cry of the White Wolf close behind them. They hid in the bushes, and waited for a chance to kill him. Pretty soon they heard something jumping toward them. Then a fat young buck ran past, and they killed it with their arrows. While they were cutting it up the White Wolf circled around them yelping and howling.

" 'See, he wishes to make peace, and so he has brought us meat,' said the hunters.

"They called to him, and he trotted off. The hunters felt good about it. They believed that the wolves wished to make peace with them. They ran joyfully to the village with the meat, and told the people what had happened.

" 'It is good,' cried the Lenapes. 'The wolves wish peace. They are bringing us food.'

"They made many fires, and began to cook the meat. Then the medicine-man rushed into the center of the camp, and warned the people against eating the meat. He said it was filled with Evil Spirits, and would surely kill or bewitch any one who ate it. The Lenapes did

not like his words. They were very hungry, and the meat smelled good.

"At last a young warrior said that he was not afraid to eat the meat. He helped himself to a big piece, and began to eat it while the people watched him with hungry eyes. When he had finished half of it he began to laugh at the Lenapes, and told them they were foolish to remain hungry while there was such good meat close at hand. Then as the women and children crowded toward the fires to get some of the meat, the boastful young man fell down dead. Then the wolves began to yelp in the woods around the camp, and the voice of the great White Wolf was the loudest of all.

"My friends, that made the Lenapes very mad. The warriors promised to kill the great white leader. Whenever he howled around the camp some of those men ran out in the darkness to kill him. Well, my friends, those brave warriors never came back. The Lenapes never found their bones, so the wolves must have carried them off.

"By that time the wolves had chased away all the game, and the Lenapes had only a few dried nuts, and some roots to eat. Their hearts were very heavy, for the warriors who had gone to find a good hunting ground sent them no word.

274348B

"'Those men must have been eaten up by the wolves,' they told one another.

"Then one time as they were sitting around the council-fire they heard the White Wolf howling right at the edge of the camp. Then they heard some one calling. The warriors seized their bows, and ran out to see who was there. They found a warrior named Yellow Bird crawling toward the village. He was one of the scouts who went to find a hunting ground. His body was covered with wounds, and he was almost dead. They carried him into the camp, and tried to help him.

"Then they heard the wolf cry again, and another scout ran into the village. He, too, was covered with wounds. Then the White Wolf howled twice more, and two more scouts ran into the camp. Four dying warriors were now lying about the fire, one from each of the hunting parties that went to find game. All of them told the same story.

"They told the Lenapes that they went a long ways from the village, but the wolves always ran ahead of them and drove away the game. When it was dark the wolves would circle around, and howl. Then when the hunters grew tired and weak because they had no food the wolves set upon them and tore them to pieces. The great White Wolf always led the fight. Only one man in each party was spared. Then

the wolves chased that man toward the Lenape camp. They raced along behind him, and whenever he slowed down they snapped at him and gave him many wounds. When the tired runner reached the edge of the camp the terrible Medicine Wolf sprang upon him, and drove him into the village to die.

"When they heard those stories the Lenapes gave up hope. They believed that the Medicine Wolf would wipe away the whole tribe. They ran to the lodge of their greatest medicine-man, and asked him to help them. He told them that he could do nothing against the power of the great White Wolf. Then the war-chief called the people together. He told them that he believed they had done a foolish thing to make war against the wolves without hearing what they had to say about the disappearance of Spotted Fawn. He said that perhaps the wolves were not to blame. Then he asked some of the bravest warriors to go to the rock where the child had disappeared, and see if they could find any trace of her body.

"Well, my friends, the next day some of the greatest warriors in the tribe went to the rock to search for Spotted Fawn. They looked everywhere, but they found no trace of her. When it grew dark they returned to the village, and told the people that the wolves must have eaten the daughter of Fighting Elk. 'We

could not even find her bones,' they declared. The chief did not feel right about it.

"'I have had a dream,' he told the Lenapes. 'I do not believe the wolves killed Spotted Fawn.'

"The next day he sent different warriors to the rock to look for signs of Spotted Fawn. They looked everywhere, but found nothing. Then as the shadows began to fall they decided to return to the village, and declare that the wolves must have eaten the child. There was one, however, who was not satisfied. He kept traveling up and down the stream. Then as his friends started away he called them back.

"'See, I have found her,' he cried.

"He was looking down into a deep pool. They all looked into the water, and saw the body of little Spotted Fawn wedged fast between two rocks. Then they ran to the camp, and told what they had found. All the people rushed to the stream to see if it was true. When they saw the child at the bottom of the pool they felt bad because they had blamed the wolves. 'There is only one thing to do,' declared the Lenape chief. 'We must ask the wolves to meet us at the council-fire. Then we will tell them about this thing. We will ask them to feel good about it. We must give them many presents. We will ask them to put away their weapons, and make peace with us. We

have been foolish. Now we must make the best of it.'

"Well, my friends, the next day many Lenape scouts went away into the forest to find the wolves, and ask them to come to a council-fire. They traveled a long ways, and whenever they saw a wolf they called to him and told him that the Lenapes wished peace.

"At last the day of the council came, and all the Lenapes except the old men and the women and children went to the meeting place. Pretty soon the wolves began to come. They appeared to have good hearts, and seemed glad to make peace. The council-circle was formed, and to show their good hearts a Lenape sat beside each wolf. In the center sat the great Lenape war-chief, and the great white Medicine Wolf. The pipe was lighted, and every one smoked it. Then the Lenapes made many talks, and told the wolves that their hearts were heavy because they had made war on them.

"Then it came time for the wolves to speak, and the Lenapes waited to hear what they proposed to do. The great White Wolf stood up as if he intended to say something. Then he gave his war-cry, and jumped at the throat of the Lenape chief. Then every wolf and every Lenape began to fight. My friends, it was a terrible battle, for they fought until only the White Wolf and the great Lenape medicine-

man were left alive. They fought a long time but neither could kill the other.

" 'Well, we are both great Medicine People, and I see that we cannot harm each other—there is no use fighting any more,' the wolf told the Lenape.

"Then the Lenape hurried to the camp to tell the old men and the women and children what had happened. That is how we know about it. The great White Wolf ran to his village to protect the old wolves and the little wolves which were all that were left of his people.

" 'Well, my friends, as the young Lenapes and the young wolves grew up they came to hate each other, so that our people and the wolves have been at war as long as any of us can remember. The great white Medicine Wolf still lives. Many of our warriors have gone out to kill him, but few came back. Those that did come back bore many wounds, and finally went mad like Fighting Elk.

"The great White Wolf has again come into our country. You have heard his cry. Something has brought him here. It is bad. Much trouble will come of it. Bad things have already begun to happen. Tindey has destroyed the forest. One of our young men has disappeared. Our hunters can find no game. I believe worse things will come upon us. My heart is heavy. I have finished."

Sky Dog Tells a Story

When Sky Dog ceased speaking the Delawares sat a long time with their heads bowed in gloomy meditation. An impressive hush settled upon the council lodge. No one spoke. Even the children understood the peril and were frightened into silence.

CHAPTER IX

OFF ON A PERILOUS QUEST

THE Delawares went to their lodges with heavy hearts. The legend recited by Sky Dog had filled them with superstitious fear. Many of the old people had heard it before, and they recalled the great misfortunes which had always followed the visits of the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. They prophesied gloomily for the days to come, and their warnings filled the people with despair.

"Well, now we know about that strange cry," Spotted Deer told Running Fox. "How do you feel about it?"

"It is bad," Running Fox replied, solemnly. "Spotted Deer, I believe many bad days will come upon our people."

For many days Black Panther, the Delaware war-chief, sent his most expert hunters into the unburned forest on the opposite side of the river to search for game. They hunted faithfully from daylight until dark and Running Fox and Spotted Deer made several perilous journeys far back into the hills. Their efforts brought little result, however, for game

of all sorts seemed suddenly to have vanished from the Delaware hunting grounds.

"It is useless," declared old Sky Dog, the medicine-man. "Something has turned the Evil People against us. We must try to find out what it is."

The superstitious Delawares were quick to act upon his suggestion. They began to ask one another who had incurred the displeasure of the Evil Beings who they believed were afflicting them. The question became the sole topic of conversation. The most trivial incidents were recalled, and discussed as possible reasons for the ill-fortune which had fallen upon the tribe. None of them, however, seemed sufficiently important to have given offense to Medsit, the Evil One, and his host of savage followers.

The Delawares were troubled and perplexed. There was a great difference of opinion. Some believed that Getanittowit, the Great One, was displeased with them. Some declared that it was Mauwallauwin, the Great Hunter. Others said that Medsit, the Evil One, was afflicting them. A few felt certain that it was one of the lesser Evil Monsters whom they had offended. They realized, however, that unless they could agree on the cause of their trouble it would be impossible to avert the disaster which threatened to overtake them.

Then a new possibility suddenly suggested itself. It took form in the imagination of one of the old men. He suggested it to his friends. They whispered it to others. It spread from lodge to lodge. The camp soon rang with it.

At last the Delawares had found an object for suspicion. It was the famous medicine trophy which Running Fox and Spotted Deer had captured from their foes, the Mohawks. The imaginative Delawares suddenly looked upon it with superstitious fear. They believed that the great Mohawk chief, Standing Wolf, the former owner of the medicine trophy, whom Running Fox had killed in battle, in some manner still exercised his power through the agency of the mysterious medicine bundle.

For many years the Delawares had credited that famous war-leader with all sorts of supernatural powers. His success in battle, his immunity from injury and death, and his great physical strength had convinced them that Standing Wolf was protected by some powerful Spirit or Medicine Charm. They made many attempts to learn the secret. A number of famous Delaware warriors lost their lives on the quest. Then Running Fox and his companion went to the Mohawk camp, and learned what the Delawares wished to know. In addition they secured the mysterious medicine trophy itself, and brought it safely to the Dela-

ware camp. Then when Standing Wolf led an immense war-party against them, Running Fox carried the captured trophy into the thick of the fight, and not only led his people to their first victory over the Mohawks, but also fought and killed the great Mohawk war-chief. From that moment the Delawares believed that Running Fox had become possessed of the same mysterious power which the medicine trophy had conferred upon Standing Wolf.

Now, however, they turned against it, and blamed it for their present misfortunes. Having once fastened suspicion upon it, they found little difficulty in persuading themselves that it was responsible for whatever ill-luck had befallen them since it had been brought to the camp.

"We must tell Sky Dog about it," they said.

Sky Dog listened gravely as the Delawares told him of their suspicions against the Mohawk medicine trophy. He saw at once that it offered him a chance to regain the prestige which he feared he had lost by his inability to help his people in the present crisis. He had looked upon the Mohawk trophy with grave misgivings ever since it had come to the Delaware village. Like most of his tribesmen, he had credited the noted Mohawk war-leader with all sorts of mysterious powers, and he believed that the great medicine trophy was the source

of them. Although he would not acknowledge it to his people, he had long regarded it with superstitious fear. He longed to see it removed from the camp, but he was far too wise to give voice to his desire. He knew that both Black Panther and his son would take offense at the suggestion, and he had no wish to incur the displeasure of the powerful Delaware war-chief. Now, however, he determined to make the most of the opportunity which had presented itself.

"Yes, my friends, I believe the mysterious Mohawk Medicine Bundle has brought all this trouble upon us," declared the wily old medicine-man. "I have known about it a long time. I believe that Standing Wolf has something to do with it. My friends, I have seen that great chief running through the village when every one was asleep. Yes, I ran after him, but he is a Shadow Person, and I could not come up with him. It is bad. Something must be done about it. I cannot do anything to help you while that mysterious Medicine Bundle is in the camp. I believe it has done great harm. I believe it has brought the great White Wolf upon us."

His words strengthened the fears of his tribesmen. They looked upon him as a powerful Medicine Person, whose advice and aid might still save them from the great calamity which threatened the tribe. Their one desire,

therefore, was to free themselves from the influence of the mysterious Mohawk medicine trophy.

"How can we put away this strange Medicine Bundle?" they inquired anxiously.

"I cannot tell you that," replied the crafty medicine-man. "It was brought here by Running Fox, the son of our great chief, Black Panther. Running Fox went through much danger to get it. It was a brave thing to do. He feels good about it. Black Panther feels good about it. My friends, I do not believe they will give it up."

The Delawares were in a quandary. Their famous chief, Black Panther, was a man of great influence and power who commanded the respect and admiration of his people. They had no desire to offend him, and they saw no way of avoiding it if they told him of their fears concerning the Mohawk medicine trophy. They knew that he took great pride in the splendid achievement of his son, and they had little hope that he would ask Running Fox to surrender his hard-earned war trophy. As for Running Fox himself, they knew only too well the temper of that fiery young warrior, and they realized that it would be useless to speak to him on the subject.

It was not many days, however, before both Black Panther and Running Fox learned of

the suspicions which had fallen upon the medicine trophy. Spotted Deer first heard it, and promptly told Running Fox. Then one of the old men told Black Panther about it.

"It is bad," Running Fox said, gloomily. "Some one has given our people bad words about this great thing. I do not believe what they say about it."

"No, no, it is not true," Spotted Deer declared, fiercely. "That great Medicine Bundle has helped us to do big things. It has made our people stronger than the Mohawks. It has made you a great leader. Running Fox, you must not do away with it."

"Perhaps these people have told my father about it," suggested Running Fox. "Perhaps he will ask me to give it up."

Spotted Deer remained silent. The possibility staggered him. His courage weakened at the thought of losing the famous trophy. He wondered if the great Delaware war-chief would eventually share the superstitious fears of his people. They were not left long in doubt, for as they sat at the edge of the camp discussing the subject Black Panther sent a lad to summon Running Fox to his lodge.

"See, my father has sent for me," Running Fox said, anxiously. "Perhaps something bad will come of it. My heart is heavy."

Running Fox found his father alone in the

lodge. Black Panther motioned his son to seat himself beside him at the fire. Then for long, anxious moments the stern Delaware chief gazed silently at the glowing embers. Running Fox waited patiently for him to speak.

"My son, I have called you here to tell you something bad," Black Panther said, solemnly.

"I am listening, my father," Running Fox replied, humbly.

"It is good," declared the war-chief. "My son, bad days have come upon our people. Our hunters can find no game. Tindey, the Fire Monster, has destroyed our hunting grounds. Lowan, the Cold Time, is almost here. It is bad. We have no meat. Many of our old people will die. Sky Dog has told you about the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. It has called about our camp. I believe much harm will come of it. My son, our people are uneasy. The old people are frightened. They say that some Evil Person is working against us. I believe it is true. Our people have been talking about it many days. I have heard their words. They have made my heart heavy. They say that the great Mohawk Medicine Bundle has brought these bad days upon us."

"Do you believe it?" Running Fox inquired, anxiously, as his father waited for him to speak.

"No, my son, I do not believe it," replied Black Panther. "Sky Dog believes it. Many

of our people believe it. It is bad. Our people say that we must do away with it. They say that if we keep it in the camp many bad things will happen to us. They say that the spirit of the great Mohawk chief, Standing Wolf, is in that mysterious Medicine Bundle. Yes, they say that when we are sleeping it comes out and calls the Evil People. They say we must move the camp. I believe it is the best thing to do. We will go down the water, and stay in the lodges of our brothers, the Minsi. We will hunt with them, and bring in much meat. We will live with our brothers until Lowan, the Cold Time, passes, and Siquon, The-Time-Of-Growing-Things, comes. Now, my son, I must give you bad words. Our people say that we must not take that great Medicine Bundle to the Minsi village. They say it will bring bad days to those people. Yes, Sky Dog says that. Perhaps it is true. I do not know about it. My heart is heavy. I cannot give you any more words."

Running Fox continued silent. The crisis which he had been dreading was at hand. It seemed as if his people had turned against him. He believed they held him responsible for the ill-fortune which had befallen them. For the moment it filled him with despair. He felt crushed and overwhelmed. It seemed as if the perils and hardships which he and Spotted Deer

had undergone had been in vain. He rallied at the thought. Grief suddenly gave way to anger. His own faith in the Mohawk medicine trophy was still unshaken. He believed that he had become possessed of the same mysterious powers which had made Standing Wolf famous. The thought gave him confidence. He determined to prove the power of the sacred medicine trophy to the suspicious Delawares. A great resolution suddenly filled his mind. He turned to his father with the light of battle glistening in his eyes. Black Panther was waiting for him to speak.

"My father, I have listened to your words," he said, quietly. "Our people have turned against the great Mohawk Medicine Bundle. They are foolish. You are a great chief. You say you do not believe those things. It is enough. My father, you have seen this strange Medicine Bundle do big things. You have seen me carry it in the fight, and drive the Mohawks through the forest like rabbits. You have seen me carry it, and kill the great chief Standing Wolf. Those were great things. Our people do not remember them. Well, I must do something bigger. I will do it. I have spoken."

Black Panther showed no inclination to question him. He had complete confidence in the ability of the fearless young warrior, and he believed that nothing but death would stop him

from redeeming his pledge. The Delaware chief thrilled with pride as he saw resolute determination expressed in the face of his son.

The night was far spent as Running Fox left the lodge, and hurried through the camp to find his friend. He found Spotted Deer awaiting him at a familiar rendezvous outside the village. Running Fox seemed to be in buoyant spirits, and Spotted Deer looked at him in surprise.

"Well, my brother, have you heard good words?" he inquired, hopefully.

"No, Spotted Deer, what I heard was bad," replied Running Fox.

Then he seated himself beside Spotted Deer, and related the details of the interview with his father. Spotted Deer listened with grave attention.

"What are you going to do?" he asked, when Running Fox finished speaking.

"Spotted Deer, we brought this sacred Medicine Bundle to our people," declared Running Fox. "It made them feel good. They gave us big words. It made them strong. When the Mohawks came we drove them away. Now they feel different. They believe that this great Medicine Bundle has brought bad days upon them. They believe it has brought the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. Perhaps their hearts are bad toward us because we brought this

Medicine Thing to the village. Now I am going to make them feel good about it. I am going to do something big. I am going to do something they will talk about a long time. Then they will know that this great Medicine Bundle is good. They will see that it gives me power to do big things. Spotted Deer, when our people go away to the village of our brothers, the Minsi, I am going to stay behind. I am going to keep the great Medicine Bundle with me. Then I am going away to find the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. If I find him I will kill him, and bring his scalp to our people."

Spotted Deer gasped with astonishment. He could scarcely believe what he had heard. The boldness of the plan bewildered him. He stood in great awe of the strange Medicine Creatures in whom his people believed, and the thought of defying the powerful white Medicine Wolf filled him with alarm.

"Running Fox, you are very brave, but it would be foolish to try to find the great White Wolf," Spotted Deer declared, earnestly. "He is a powerful Medicine Creature. He has killed many of our people. You have heard Sky Dog tell about it. My brother, if you try to do this thing I believe you will throw away your life."

"Perhaps what you say is true, but I feel different about it," replied Running Fox. "I believe the great Medicine Bundle will help me.

I must show our people that we have not brought this trouble upon them. If I kill the mysterious white Medicine Wolf, then they will know that the great Medicine Bundle is good. Spotted Deer, it is in my heart to do this thing, and I am going ahead with it."

Spotted Deer offered no further objections. He knew only too well that having once resolved to embark on the perilous undertaking Running Fox would not be turned from his purpose.

"My brother, I see that you are going ahead with this thing," Spotted Deer said, soberly. "Well, I will not talk any more against it. Now I will tell you something. You say that our people have turned against this great Medicine Thing. Well, my brother, I was with you when you took it away from the Mohawk camp. Yes, I was with you when you brought it to our people. You say that you must do this thing to show our people that we have not brought these bad days upon them. We have done this thing together. Well, then I must go with you. It is the only thing to do. I will not stay behind. If the great White Wolf kills you, then he must kill me. I have spoken."

"Spotted Deer, your words make my heart feel big," Running Fox declared, feelingly. "I know that you are not afraid to die, so if you feel like going with me I will not talk against it."

"It is good," replied Spotted Deer.

The following day at sunset the Delawares assembled before the council lodge to discuss the advisability of abandoning the camp, and moving down the river to the village of their tribesmen, the Minsi. They agreed that it was the best thing to do. Then while Running Fox and Spotted Deer listened in great suspense, an old man named High Bear made a speech against the Mohawk medicine trophy.

"Delawares, I have something to tell you," said High Bear. "I have had a dream. It was bad. I saw Standing Wolf talking to the mysterious Medicine Bundle. He was talking bad words against us. My people, I believe that strange Medicine Thing has brought all this trouble upon us. Running Fox and Spotted Deer did a great thing to bring it here, but I believe it has turned out bad. My friends, we must get rid of this thing. If we take it to the Minsi village, I believe we will bring bad days upon those great people. I have finished."

When the old man finished his talk the Delawares maintained an awkward silence. None of them appeared willing to endorse his suspicions. All eyes were turned expectantly upon the grim Delaware war-chief. It was evident that they expected him to defend the trophy for which his son had risked his life. Black Panther, however, seemed reluctant to speak.

He waited a long time before he finally addressed them.

"My friends, I have listened for your words, but you will not speak," he said. "I believe that many of you believe what High Bear has told you. I feel different about it. I do not believe that this great Medicine Bundle has anything to do with the trouble that has come upon us. I believe it is good. It has given us power to defeat the Mohawks, and kill their great chief Standing Wolf. I believe it would be foolish to do away with it but if you all feel different about it I will not talk against you. Come, my friends, tell me how you feel about this thing."

A number of warriors responded to his appeal. They declared that they were suspicious of the Mohawk trophy, and believed it should be destroyed. The majority of the tribe seemed of the same opinion. Black Panther looked searchingly at his son.

"Delawares, I will tell you how I feel about this thing," cried Running Fox, rising to his feet. "You all know how this great Medicine Bundle came here. You all know how it made us strong to drive away the Mohawks. You all know how it gave me power to kill the great chief Standing Wolf. My brothers, do you remember these things? No, I do not believe it. You have listened to foolish words. You have

turned against the great Medicine Thing. It is bad. Now I will tell you what I propose to do. I will not go with you to our brothers the Minsi. I will stay behind and keep this mysterious Medicine Bundle. I am going to show you something big. I will not tell you about it until it comes to pass. I will show you that this great Medicine Bundle gives me power like it gave Standing Wolf. I have spoken."

His words greatly impressed the Delawares. He had already won their respect and admiration by his remarkable achievements, and they believed him capable of fulfilling any pledge he might make. They felt certain, therefore, that the dauntless young warrior would either perform some exploit sufficiently important to restore their confidence in the Mohawk Medicine Bundle, or forfeit his life in the attempt. It was a remarkable exhibition of his own faith in the captured medicine trophy, which made a strong appeal to his people. Indeed, there were some among them who actually believed that Running Fox had become possessed of some strange power or medicine which enabled him to scoff at perils, and accomplish the most difficult achievements. Having heard his challenge, therefore, there were none who cared to talk further against the mysterious Medicine Bundle.

"Well, my friends, you have heard what Running Fox has to say about this thing," said Black Panther. "Most of you believe that the great Medicine Bundle has brought the Evil People upon us. I do not believe it. Those of you who have been troubled about it may now rest easy. Running Fox will keep it from you until he shows you that it is good. I do not know what he is going to do. He is a good war-leader. A good war-leader does not tell what he is about to do. Perhaps he will lose his life. That would be worse than a Mohawk arrow through my heart. He is my son, but I will not hold him back. My friends, I will tell him to go. It is the only thing to do. Perhaps some of you believe it was a bad thing to bring the great Medicine Bundle to our village. Perhaps some of you feel bad against Running Fox because he brought it here. Well, he will take it away. It is good."

The Delawares were quick to recognize a stinging rebuke in the words of their chief. They believed that their distrust of the Mohawk medicine trophy had led him to believe that they blamed his son for the evils which had fallen upon them. The thought caused them great distress. They feared that they had offended and hurt the man who for many years had devoted his life to the welfare of his people.

"It is bad. It is bad," they told one another, as they left the council-fire.

Two days later the Delawares abandoned their camp, and set out for the Minsi village. It was an interesting event. A small company of picked scouts embarked first, two warriors in each canoe, and moved cautiously down the river to watch for foes. Then the old people, and the women and children entered canoes, and were paddled away by stalwart warriors. Small companies of hunters traveled through the forest on foot in the hope of finding game. Then followed the chiefs and principal men of the tribe, accompanied by a strong guard of renowned warriors.

The departure was silent and gloomy, for the Delawares felt that they had been driven from the camp, like hungry dogs, to beg food at the distant lodges of their tribesmen. They looked with longing eyes at the splendid village with its great council lodge, its long rows of comfortable bark lodges, its strong log palisade for defense against foes, and the patch of cultivated ground which for many seasons had yielded bountiful crops of corn, beans and squashes. They were leaving a place of peace and security, and risking the hardships and perils of the wilderness, to offer themselves as objects for charity before their more fortunate tribesmen. It filled them with grief. The

women sobbed softly to themselves. The old men blinked furiously as they felt their aged eyes grow moist and hot. The grim fighting men, as usual, concealed their emotions.

Black Panther was the last to depart. Before he finally stepped into the waiting canoe he turned to address Running Fox and Spotted Deer, who stood at the edge of the camp, watching soberly, as their people began the dismal journey to the Minsi village.

"Running Fox, you are my son," said Black Panther. "Spotted Deer is your friend. It is good. I will make Spotted Deer my other son. Both of you are very brave. You are about to risk your lives in some great deed. Perhaps I shall never again see either of you. I will ask Getanittowit, the Great One, to help you. I will tell you that I believe the great medicine trophy is good. I am not against it. I believe you are doing a good thing. Now I must go with my people. I will take your hand."

Each of the lads clasped the hand of the noted Delaware chief. Neither of them spoke. Black Panther, too, remained silent. Then, when the impressive farewell was ended, he entered the last canoe, and was paddled rapidly down the river.

CHAPTER X

THE LONE SENTINEL

When the canoe bearing Black Panther finally disappeared around a turn of the river, the two lads who had been left behind walked slowly toward the deserted Delaware camp. As they passed through the log stockade and entered the lifeless village they suddenly felt lonely and depressed. They stopped, and looked sadly about the silent camp with its abandoned lodges, its dying camp-fires and its deserted thoroughfares. It seemed dreary and unfamiliar.

"Our people have gone, everything looks dead," declared Running Fox.

Spotted Deer nodded in silent assent.

They made their way to the lodge of Black Panther. Running Fox hesitated before the entrance. For several moments he seemed reluctant to enter. Then he fought back his emotions, and disappeared through the doorway. He came out with the famous Mohawk medicine trophy in his hands.

"See, here is the great Medicine Bundle which has frightened our people," he told

Spotted Deer. "My brother, are you afraid of it?"

"No, Running Fox, I am not afraid of it," replied Spotted Deer. "I believe it will help us to do big things."

"Do you believe it will give us power to kill the mysterious white Medicine Wolf?" Running Fox asked, quickly.

Spotted Deer remained silent. Running Fox looked searchingly into his face. Spotted Deer met the challenge without flinching. However, there was doubt in his eyes, and Running Fox read it.

"My brother, I see that you feel bad about this thing," he said, quietly.

"Running Fox, I am thinking about the words of Sky Dog," replied Spotted Deer. "He is a great Medicine Person. He has told us that the great White Wolf is a mysterious Medicine Creature. Many brave warriors have set out to kill him. Few of them ever came back. The White Wolf is still alive. He must be very strong."

Running Fox made no reply. He held the mysterious Medicine Bundle before him, and gazed upon it with eager, questioning eyes. It seemed as if he were challenging its power and ability to help him. Spotted Deer watched him in silence. Many moments passed. Then Run-

ning Fox rose, and carried the Medicine Bundle into the lodge.

"Well, my brother, there is nothing here to eat," Running Fox said, as he returned from the lodge. "Come, we will go across the water, and try to find something."

They found an abandoned canoe, and paddled across the river. They hunted faithfully until dusk, but only killed a single grouse. Darkness had already fallen when they finally returned to the village. They made a fire before the lodge of Black Panther and broiled the grouse over the embers.

Then for a long time they sat gazing thoughtfully into the flames. The night was cold and dark, and a biting northeast wind moaned dismally between the lodges. The sky was black and threatening, and Lowan, the Cold Monster, shrieked his challenge through the wilderness.

"I do not like this, it will be hard for our people," Running Fox said, soberly.

They knew that the Delawares were camped somewhere in the grim black forest, and they feared that the old people, and the women and children might suffer from cold and hunger. The possibility greatly distressed them. They believed that their people would hold them responsible for their suffering, and the thought made them miserable. Running Fox was still further disturbed by the idea that Spotted Deer

had suddenly lost faith in the power of the Mohawk medicine trophy. At last he determined to ask him about it.

"Spotted Deer, I have talked big words," said Running Fox. "I have set out to do a big thing. Perhaps it is foolish. Perhaps what Sky Dog says is true. Perhaps the great Medicine Bundle will turn against me. Perhaps I shall throw away my life. I believe you feel bad about this thing. Well, my brother, I will not ask you to go ahead with it. I will go alone."

Spotted Deer looked at him in astonishment. For some moments the unexpected proposal seemed to have deprived him of speech. Then his surprise gave way to anger. His eyes flashed with the light of battle.

"Running Fox, you are my brother, but your words are like the arrows of a foe," he replied, reproachfully. "Do you believe that I am afraid?"

"No, no, I do not believe it," Running Fox cried, loyally. "I know that you are brave."

"Well, my brother, I like those words," Spotted Deer told him. "You have asked me something which I cannot tell you. I believe that this great medicine trophy is good. I believe that it will help us. You ask me if it will give us power to kill the great White Wolf. I cannot tell you. I do not know. But I am not

afraid of that great Medicine Creature. No, no, my brother, I will not turn back. I have set out to do this thing, and I am going through with it. I am going with you to find the great White Wolf. You have heard my words. It is enough."

"Spotted Deer, you are a brave friend," Running Fox said, warmly.

At that moment they heard something fall, inside the lodge. Seizing their weapons they rushed through the doorway and found the medicine trophy upon the ground. They looked at it in silence. They feared it was a bad omen. Running Fox finally picked it up, and carefully examined it. Then he hung it on its tripod of poles, and they returned to the fire.

"Perhaps it was Standing Wolf," Spotted Deer said, softly. "Sky Dog says he has seen him running through the camp. Perhaps he has come out of that strange Medicine Bundle."

"No, I do not believe it," declared Running Fox. "I do not know how it came to fall down, but I do not believe Standing Wolf had anything to do with it."

Then they heard the mysterious cry in the north. It came to them on the gale, and it sounded indistinct and far away. They listened uneasily as it echoed through the night. It filled their minds with the story which Sky Dog had told. They wondered if they, too, would

share the fate of the unfortunate warrior Fighting Elk, and the other brave Delawares who had recklessly answered the challenge.

"Perhaps Standing Wolf has called him," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Well, he is far away," replied Running Fox. "I do not believe he will come any nearer before it grows light. Then we will be watching for him. Now I am going to do something. Sky Dog says that Standing Wolf is a Shadow Person. Sky Dog says his spirit is in this great Medicine Bundle. Sky Dog says it comes out when it is dark. Well, I am not afraid. I am going to find out about it."

Running Fox rose, and entered the lodge. He asked Spotted Deer to follow him. Then he took down the medicine trophy, and carefully examined the buckskin thongs with which it was bound.

"See," he said. "Everything is tight. Nothing can come out or go in without moving these things. Well, I am going to keep this thing with me until the light comes. If the spirit of Standing Wolf came out it cannot get back. Now I will know about it."

Running Fox placed the Mohawk medicine trophy inside of his buckskin shirt, and spread his robe in his accustomed place at the side of the lodge. Spotted Deer looked upon him with admiring eyes. Then he, too, prepared his robe

for the night. In a short time both were sleeping soundly.

When they awakened at daylight, Running Fox immediately drew forth the Mohawk medicine trophy. He examined it with great care. The bindings were intact. He passed it to Spotted Deer.

"See," said Running Fox. "Everything is tight. Nothing came out. Nothing went in."

Spotted Deer spent some time examining the wrappings of the Medicine Bundle. He saw nothing to indicate that they had been molested. He finally returned it to Running Fox.

"Yes, my brother, I see that everything is tight," he said.

"Well, do you believe that the spirit of Standing Wolf came out of it?" Running Fox inquired.

"I do not know," replied Spotted Deer. "Standing Wolf is a Shadow Person. Those mysterious people can do many wonderful things."

Running Fox hung the medicine trophy in its proper place, and remained silent. He saw that Spotted Deer was filled with a great dread of the mysterious Medicine Creatures, and he determined to say nothing further about them. In fact, Running Fox himself inherited all the superstitious fears of his people concerning these strange creatures, but he also believed

that the great medicine trophy had given him power to resist them.

When the lads came from the lodge a few moments later they found that Lowan, the Cold Monster, had suddenly taken possession of the earth. The air was sharp and biting, and a light fall of snow had fallen during the night.

"Hi, Lowan has spread his robe upon the ground," cried Running Fox. "Now we must hurry away, and look for tracks."

When they reached the river they found the shores crusted with ice, and they realized that the long season of cold was at hand. They knew that it would make their task doubly difficult, and that many days of hardship and privation were before them. Under any other circumstances they would have considered it the height of folly to venture forth upon such an expedition at that season. However, they felt that it was their duty to clear themselves of the suspicion which had fallen upon them, without delay, and for that reason they were willing to make the sacrifice. Besides, they knew that it was only at that season that the mysterious white Medicine Wolf appeared in their country, and if they hoped to find and overcome him they must go to hunt him at that time.

They were about to enter the canoe when Running Fox suddenly hissed a warning. As Spotted Deer turned toward him, Running Fox

pointed up the river. A deer was swimming toward the opposite shore. It was a buck, and only its nose and horns showed above the water, for it had seen the Delawares, and was trying to conceal itself.

"Hi, Mauwallauwin has taken pity on us," cried Running Fox. "It is a good sign."

They hurried into the canoe, and started in pursuit of their game. The deer was almost halfway across the river, and the Delawares paddled furiously to overtake it. Aware that it was being pursued, the buck was putting all its strength into its efforts, and the hunters gained slowly.

"Achtu is a fast swimmer, we must hurry," warned Running Fox.

They forced themselves to still greater exertions, and the canoe swept forward at tremendous speed. The distance between the game and the hunters grew steadily less with each stroke of the paddle. At last they came within bow-shot. They withheld their arrows, however, for the buck had sunk still lower in the water, and only the tip of its nose and part of its horns were exposed.

"Wait until he leaves the water," advised Running Fox.

"Yes, yes, it is the only chance," agreed Spotted Deer.

The buck had covered three quarters of the

distance across the river, and the Delawares tried to get as close as possible. When the deer finally floundered into shallow water they were within a canoe length of it. Then, as the frightened creature sprang toward the shore, the hunters shot their arrows. Both struck the buck behind the shoulder. For an instant only the deer wavered, and then it bounded up the bank and disappeared into the timber.

"Hurry! Hurry!" cried Running Fox, as he drove the canoe recklessly upon the shore.

They leaped into the shallow water, and scrambled furiously up the bushy bank. The trail was marked with blood, and they believed that the buck had been fatally wounded. Within an arrow-flight they found it lying dead.

"It is good! It is good!" Running Fox cried, joyfully. "Getanittowit has heard our words. Mauwallauwin has sent us meat for our journey."

"Hi, Hi, look here!" Spotted Deer called, excitedly.

He had advanced a short distance farther into the woods, and was crouching and closely scanning the ground. When Running Fox hurried to his side he saw fresh moccasin tracks leading away from the river. For some moments the lads stared at them in silence. Then they rose, and looked anxiously into the woods.

"Come, we must find out about this thing," Running Fox said, cautiously.

He turned, and followed the trail toward the river. The tracks led the other way, but the crafty young Delaware first wished to learn where the trail began. It ended within several bow-lengths of the water, and the sharp-eyed young scouts soon discovered evidence which led them to believe that the mysterious prowler had passed the night at that spot. Where he had come from they had no way of learning, for the light fall of snow had obliterated the old trail, and registered the new.

"My brother, I believe that man is a scout," said Running Fox. "I believe he hid here to watch our camp. It is bad."

"Perhaps he followed our people down the river," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," replied Running Fox. "Well, we must try to find out where he has gone. Come, we will take the buck to the village, and then we will come back here and try to find out about this thing."

"Perhaps that person is watching us," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that may be true," agreed Running Fox. "We must be cautious."

They dragged the buck to the canoe, and paddled rapidly to the Delaware camp. Then, after they had concealed the deer in one of

the lodges, they again crossed the river to follow the trail of the unknown prowler. They approached the shore with great caution, however, for they feared that they might blunder into an ambush.

"See, the white robe is going away, we must hurry," said Running Fox.

The light snow was melting fast, and they realized that it would soon be gone. They hurried along the trail, hoping to learn as much as possible about the daring scout, who had ventured into their territory, before his tracks melted out. The trail led away from the water for an arrow-flight or more, and then it turned and continued toward the north.

"Perhaps this warrior is one of the people who sent Tindey into our hunting grounds," said Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," Running Fox replied, savagely.

They had not gone far before the trail again turned toward the river. It ended at the edge of the water. Running Fox nodded understandingly at Spotted Deer.

"That person has gone away in a canoe," he said. "He was very sly. He must be a scout. I believe he came here to find out about our people. See, he left his canoe in those bushes. Then he crept down through the woods, like Woakus, the fox. When he could see into the camp he stopped to watch. Perhaps he saw

our people go away. Anyway I believe he knows that they have gone. Spotted Deer, I believe something bad will come of this."

"It is mysterious," declared Spotted Wolf.

Then, as they realized that for the present there was no way of learning anything more about the stranger, they returned to the Delaware camp to prepare for the journey which they hoped to begin the following day. They spent the rest of the day drying deer-meat over a fire.

"We will have meat for many days," said Running Fox. "We will not have to look for game. We can travel fast. It is good."

At twilight the crafty young scouts lighted a number of large fires in various parts of the camp. They hoped any of their foes who might steal down the river under cover of the darkness would see the light, and believe that the Delawares were still in possession of the village. Then, as a further precaution against attack, the lads took turns at watching beside the water. However, they neither heard nor saw anything to arouse their suspicions. Even the mysterious cry from the north was stilled, and they considered it a good omen.

"See, Mauwallauwin has sent us plenty of meat. Getanittowit has kept away our enemies. It is good," declared Running Fox.

At daylight they set out upon the long, peril-

ous journey into the north. They left the village in gloomy silence, for they realized that they might never return. The fate of Fighting Elk and his unfortunate companions filled their minds. Once at the edge of the river, however, they rallied their courage, and drove the words of old Sky Dog from their thoughts. They realized that the time for doubt and uncertainty had passed, and that if they hoped successfully to accomplish the great undertaking upon which they were embarking they must banish the slightest hint of uncertainty and fear.

"Well, my brother, we are setting out to do a big thing," Running Fox said, lightly. "I believe we will go through with it."

"We are Lenapes," replied Spotted Deer. "We will not turn back until we find the mysterious white Medicine Wolf."

"Those are good words," Running Fox declared, earnestly.

They had planned to use the canoe for the first day or so of their journey, but having found the fresh trail on the opposite side of the river they decided that it would be safer to travel on foot. They feared that a company of their enemies might be somewhere in the vicinity, and they believed it would be folly to expose themselves in full view on the river.

"We must keep in the woods," said Running

Fox. "Perhaps the Mohawks are watching the water."

"Yes, I believe it is the best thing to do," replied Spotted Deer. "But we must watch out for that scout."

After they had crossed the river they concealed the canoe, and set out through the forest. They realized that winter was upon them, and they were prepared for cold weather. Their dress consisted of light doeskin breeches fastened about the waist with a raw-hide belt, a heavy buckskin shirt, high buckskin moccasins, beaver skin hats, and mittens made of muskrat pelts. They carried light, warm robes of rabbit skins, their snowshoes, bows and arrows, flint knives, fire-drills, and sufficient dried meat to supply them for many days.

The light snowfall of the previous day had entirely disappeared, but the ground was white with a heavy frost as the lads set out on their journey. They kept close to the water, for they believed that if their enemies were loitering in the locality they would be quite sure to find some evidence of them along the river. They watched carefully throughout the day, but saw nothing to arouse their suspicions. They felt quite certain, however, that the unknown scout was somewhere in the vicinity, and they advanced with great caution. Then, as the day finally drew to a close, and the light slowly

faded from the forest, they looked anxiously along the river for traces of smoke, or the telltale gleam of a camp-fire. Failing to discover either of those clews before darkness fell, they determined to stop for the night in a heavy growth of pines, close beside the river.

Fearing that a fire might betray them to their foes, the Delawares seated themselves at the edge of the water to watch and listen. They believed that if enemies had planned to invade the Delaware camp they would be quite sure to move down the river under protection of the darkness. They heard nothing, however, to verify their fears.

Then, when the night was half gone, they again heard the ominous challenge from the north. It seemed considerably nearer, and there was a strange haunting fierceness about it which lingered in their ears long after the call itself had died away. It was some time before either of them spoke. Their minds were filled with thoughts of Fighting Elk and the other Delawares who had been lured to their deaths by the same weird call.

"It is nearer," Spotted Deer said, soberly. "Perhaps the strange White Wolf is coming to meet us."

"We are ready," Running Fox replied, grimly.

The night passed without adventure, how-

ever, and at daylight they resumed their journey along the river. They saw little evidence of game. The great unburned area of forest through which they traveled seemed as devoid of life as the desolate, fire-scorched waste on the other side of the water. A belated flock of ducks and a solitary squirrel were the only living things they encountered. It seemed as if they were moving through a land of the dead, and the thought oppressed them.

At the end of the day, however, they saw something which instantly roused their drooping spirits. As they suddenly turned a bend of the river they discovered a solitary sentinel standing boldly outlined on a rocky cliff above the water. He was looking up the river, and as the Delawares were sheltered in the woods they had little fear of being seen.

"Hi, there is the mysterious scout," whispered Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," Running Fox replied, cautiously.

The stranger was well beyond bow-shot, and the Delawares studied him closely. However, it was difficult to identify him. Spotted Deer thought he was a Mohawk, but Running Fox was in doubt.

"No, my brother, I do not believe that warrior is a Mohawk," he said, finally.

In the meantime the warrior had turned, and was looking steadily down the river. He held

his bow, and they saw a case of arrows upon his back. The Delawares noted, however, that he had no robe. They believed that he had left it in his canoe, which he had probably concealed somewhere at the base of the cliff. Still, they were at a loss to explain why he had exposed himself so recklessly on that prominent landmark. Before they could come to a decision he suddenly withdrew from sight.

"Now we must watch the water," said Running Fox.

They watched a long time, expecting each moment to see him appear upon the river in his canoe. Then when he failed to show himself they became perplexed. However, as the sun had already set, and the somber evening shadows were reaching across the water, the Delawares finally decided that the stranger intended to spend the night where he was.

"Perhaps when it grows dark we can creep up there, and find out who he is," proposed Spotted Deer.

"Yes, I believe it would be a good thing to do," agreed Running Fox.

CHAPTER XI

A HOSTILE CAMP

The Delawares waited until the night was well advanced, and then they set out on their perilous reconnaissance. They approached the cliff with great caution, for they believed that the unknown scout and perhaps a company of his tribesmen were encamped somewhere in the vicinity. They kept a sharp watch for the glow of a camp-fire, and listened anxiously for the sound of voices.

"Now we must watch sharp," Running Fox whispered, when they finally reached the top of the cliff.

The spot where they had seen the lone sentinel was still an arrow-flight or more ahead of them, and they approached it as noiselessly as shadows. Then they were suddenly halted by the cry of the great horned owl. It sounded a short distance to the westward, and there was something about it which made the Delawares suspicious.

"It is a signal," whispered Spotted Deer.

"Allapi, allapi, listen, listen," Running Fox cautioned him.

A moment later they heard an answer within bow-shot of them. It set their hearts beating wildly, for they realized that the mysterious scout was somewhere within sound of their voices. They stood as motionless as statues, fearing even to whisper. Then they thought they heard something passing stealthily through the undergrowth. They fitted arrows to their bows, and peered anxiously into the darkness. The sound, however, had ceased.

"He has gone," whispered Spotted Deer.

"We must follow him," said Running Fox.

They moved cautiously in the direction from which they had heard the owl call. They had little doubt that a company of their foes were camped somewhere in the vicinity, and they hoped to locate them by the flare of their fire. Then Spotted Deer suggested that the strangers might have feared to make a fire.

"Then we must listen for their words," said Running Fox.

The lads advanced through the silent black forest with the skill and caution of veterans. They knew that they were risking capture and death, and they determined to take every precaution. After a short, stealthy advance they stopped, and spent many moments watching and listening. Then they again stole forward through the night. They continued these maneuvers until they had gone a considerable dis-

tance from the river. Then, as they neither heard nor saw anything of their foes, they were somewhat doubtful as to just what to do.

"That signal was not so far away," declared Spotted Deer.

"We have come too far," agreed Running Fox. "We must circle back, and see what we can find."

They scouted tirelessly until the first signs of dawn showed in the east. Then they hurried back to the river. They had failed to discover anything of their foes, and they were discouraged and perplexed.

"Perhaps that scout went away in his canoe when it was dark," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that may be true," replied Running Fox.

However, they determined to remain, and watch the cliff. Soon after sunrise they were rewarded by seeing two warriors standing on the spot where they had seen the scout the previous day. This time the Delawares had concealed themselves nearer the cliff, and they were able to identify their enemies with little difficulty.

"Shawnees," said Running Fox.

"Yes, yes, I see who they are," Spotted Deer replied, excitedly. "They must be the people who sent Tindey against us. Come, my brother, we will creep up there, and try to kill them."

"Wait," counseled Running Fox. "They are watching for something. It would he hard to catch them. We will stay here, and find out what they are waiting for. Perhaps there is a war-party somewhere along the water. We must find out about it before we go ahead."

"You speak good words," Spotted Deer told him.

The Shawnees were keeping a sharp watch up the river, and it was evident that they were expecting either friends or foes. However, as they made no attempt to conceal themselves, it appeared more probable that they were awaiting the arrival of some of their tribesmen. The Delawares, therefore, watched the river with great interest.

Shortly after midday two canoes appeared around a long wooded arm of the shore. Each canoe held three Shawnee warriors. The scouts on the cliff hurried down to the edge of the water to meet them. As the canoes came nearer the Delawares noted that one floated low down in the water, and they believed that it was loaded with game. When the canoes were driven upon the shore, they saw that they had guessed correctly, for the Shawnees lifted the four quarters of what appeared to be a very large buck or an elk.

"The Shawnees have come a long ways for meat," Running Fox said, bitterly. "If our

friends were here we would soon be eating that meat."

In the meantime the Shawnees were engaged in earnest conversation at the edge of the water. One of the scouts who had been on the cliff was talking excitedly, and pointing across the river. His companions seemed greatly impressed by his story. It was not long before his gestures led the Delawares to believe that he was relating the details of some desperate encounter in which he had recently participated.

"That warrior is telling something big," declared Spotted Deer.

"The Shawnees talk like old women," Running Fox replied, scornfully.

A few moments later the Shawnees concealed the canoes in the bushes, and disappeared into the woods. The Delawares smiled at each other in boyish glee.

"If they leave those canoes there until it grows dark we will creep up and take them away," chuckled Spotted Deer.

"Yes, these people have made war upon us, and we must show them that we are not afraid of them," declared Running Fox. "But first we must try to find out something about them. Come, we will follow them."

The Shawnees apparently had little fear of enemies, for they left an easy trail. The Delawares followed it without difficulty. It was not

long before they came within sound of their foes. The Shawnees were talking in loud tones, and the cautious young Delawares held them in contempt.

"Those old women are making a great noise," laughed Running Fox.

"They are very foolish," replied Spotted Deer.

The Delawares noted that the Shawnees were turning farther toward the south than they themselves had gone on the previous night when they searched for the camp. They understood, therefore, why they had failed to locate it. They had little doubt that they would find a big company of Shawnee hunters assembled at the rendezvous. They also felt certain that these people were the treacherous foes who had destroyed their hunting grounds, and driven their people into exile. The thought filled them with rage, and they hurried after the Shawnees, hoping for a chance to avenge the injury.

Then they smelled smoke, and a few moments afterwards they heard people shouting. They knew that the hunters were approaching the camp. The thought warned them of their peril, and they advanced more cautiously.

"We must watch out," said Running Fox.

The next moment they found themselves within bow-shot of the camp. It was hidden away in a grove of hemlocks. but the Delawares

heard the crackle of the fire, and the voices of their foes. They immediately stopped, and looked about them with alarm. They had not intended to approach so near, and they were greatly disturbed to find themselves almost within sight of their enemies.

"It is bad—we are too close," whispered Running Fox.

Spotted Deer was about to caution a retreat, when they heard several Shawnees coming directly toward them. Their first impulse was to conceal themselves behind trees, and attack their foes from ambush. On second thought, however, they realized that even if they should disable or kill those warriors, the sounds of the attack would be quite sure to bring the entire company upon them. They decided, therefore, that the wisest plan would be to avoid an encounter. They concealed themselves, and waited anxiously for their enemies to pass.

Then the Shawnees appeared. There were four, and they were unarmed, and entirely at the mercy of the Delawares. Spotted Deer drew an arrow from his quiver, and looked at Running Fox. The latter shook his head, and Spotted Deer overcame the temptation. They knew that the Shawnees were not going far from camp without weapons, and they watched for them to return. It was not long before they

heard them coming back. They passed within a bow-length of the concealed Delawares.

"There must be something over there," Spotted Deer whispered, after the Shawnees had disappeared into the timber.

"Come, we will go and see what it is," replied Running Fox.

They stole carefully in the direction from which the Shawnees had returned, and soon found a splendid spring bubbling up in a little pool at the base of a giant pine. They realized, however, that it would be fatal to loiter at that spot.

"We must move away from here," said Running Fox.

They decided that it would be folly to attempt to reconnoiter the camp before dark, and they determined to conceal themselves somewhere in the vicinity, and wait for nightfall. Spotted Deer suggested that it might be safer to return to the river, but Running Fox thought otherwise.

"No, my brother, it would be foolish," he said. "Perhaps the Shawnees will go away from here before it grows dark. We must stay here and watch them."

"Yes, I see that it is the best thing to do," replied Spotted Deer.

CHAPTER XII

THE UNKNOWN CAPTIVE

As soon as it was sufficiently dark the Delawares advanced upon the Shawnee camp. They saw the glow from the fire while they were many arrow-flights away, and they marveled at the Shawnees' lack of caution. They could scarcely believe that experienced warriors would dare to be so bold in the domains of their enemies. Then the truth suddenly flashed into their minds.

"The Shawnees know that our people have gone away," said Running Fox.

"Hi, now I know why they are so brave," replied Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps we will fool them," Running Fox told him.

The confidence of these foes who had devastated the Delaware hunting grounds, and brought so much trouble and discomfort upon the tribe, filled the lads with anger. Their hearts burned with a fierce desire for revenge. They felt that it was their duty to wipe out the insult to their people.

When they finally came within easy bow-

range of the camp, the Delawares stopped to listen. Again they heard the crackle of the fire, and the loud reckless talking of the Shawnees. From the sounds it appeared that the company was composed of many warriors. Then, as the way seemed clear, the daring young scouts moved still nearer their foes.

"I see them," whispered Running Fox, after they had gone a short distance farther.

"Yes, I see them," Spotted Deer replied, a moment later.

They were still too far away, however, to see more than a few shadowy forms passing back and forth between the trees. They had no thought of being content with that unsatisfactory reconnaissance. Waiting a moment or so to make sure that they were in no immediate danger, they advanced directly toward the fire. They did not stop until they were almost at the edge of the circle of light which surrounded the camp. Then, standing close behind the trunk of a large hemlock, they gazed upon their foes. They counted sixteen Shawnee warriors sitting or standing about the fire. Most of them were roasting meat. It was apparent that they were a company of hunters.

"See, there is a warrior over there, lying down under his robe," whispered Spotted Deer. "He does not move. Perhaps something bad has happened to him."

"I am watching him," replied Running Fox.

The warrior whom they had suddenly discovered was lying some distance from the others, with his back toward the fire. Only the top of his head showed from beneath his robe. He was motionless, and apparently asleep. The Shawnees about the fire took no notice of him.

"Perhaps he is a scout," said Spotted Deer.

The Delawares knew from experience that very often when a warrior was engaged in some perilous undertaking he would pass several days without sleep. Then when his mission was ended he would rejoin his tribesmen, and fall into a heavy slumber from which no one would think of rousing him until he finally awakened. They believed that the warrior huddled beneath the robe was a scout wrapped in the heavy sleep of utter exhaustion.

Then they witnessed an incident which entirely changed their opinion. One of the Shawnees who had finished eating suddenly turned, and hurled a bone at the man beneath the robe. It struck him between the shoulders, but he gave no sign that he felt it. The Shawnees laughed boisterously. The Delawares regarded the proceeding with astonishment. Among their own people the act would have been considered a deadly insult, an insinuation that the victim of it was regarded on an equality with the camp dogs, which invari-

ably received the remnants from the feasts. No one would have thought of employing such an affront as a jest upon a friend or even a tribesman. Such a breach of loyalty would have led to an immediate challenge, and a fight to the death. The Shawnees, however, seemed to attach no importance to the incident.

Then the Delawares guessed the truth. The huddled figure in the robe was not a friend, not even a tribesman of the warrior who had offered the insult. He was an enemy—a prisoner—whom the Shawnees were taking to their village for the grim ceremony at the torture stake. The Delawares looked upon the unfortunate captive with new interest. They had been too thoroughly trained in the stern art of war to feel any real sympathy for the stranger, but they were curious to learn his identity.

"Perhaps he is a Mohawk," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Then the Shawnees have done a good thing," Running Fox declared, coldly.

In the meantime two of the Shawnees had left the fire, and were moving slowly toward the man beneath the robe. The Delawares watched closely. The Shawnees stopped beside the captive, and began to taunt, and laugh at him. Then, as he took no notice of them, one of them kicked him in the side. Roused to fury, the prisoner raised himself to a sitting

posture, and the Delawares saw that his hands and feet were tightly bound. The next moment he twisted about to confront his captors, and the Delawares saw his face. They gasped with astonishment.

"It is Dancing Owl!" said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, it is Dancing Owl," replied Running Fox.

It was the young Delaware warrior who had failed to return from the autumn hunt. As his tribesmen looked upon him they realized that their suspicions against the Shawnees were verified. They now were sure that it was those crafty foes who had invaded their territory and destroyed their hunting grounds. The thought roused their fighting blood. For a moment they were tempted to rush impulsively upon their enemies. The next instant they realized the folly of such a plan. As they were outnumbered by eight to one, they knew that it would be fatal to fight against such odds. Besides, they feared that if they attacked the Shawnees the latter would immediately kill the prisoner.

"No, it would be foolish to fight," declared Running Fox. "We must try to help Dancing Owl."

"Yes, we must get him out of this trouble," agreed Spotted Deer.

They knew that the task would be difficult and perilous. Still they had no thought of

wavering. Running Fox particularly felt that it was his duty to rescue the gallant young tribesman who had joined his hunting party. He recalled the agony in the eyes of the frantic mother who had asked word of her son, and he rejoiced at the opportunity to transform her grief into joy. For the moment, however, he was at a loss as to just how to proceed.

"Well, we must let Dancing Owl know that we are here," he said, finally.

"That will be a hard thing to do," Spotted Deer replied, doubtfully. "The Shawnees are sharp. We must be cautious."

"We will fool them," Running Fox declared, confidently.

At that moment, however, their thoughts were diverted by a sudden attack upon Dancing Owl. Enraged by the sullen defiance of the youthful prisoner, one of the Shawnees stooped and struck him a violent blow in the face. Dancing Owl fell backwards, but instantly struggled to a sitting posture. Then he attempted to rise upon his feet, but the Shawnee again struck him to the earth. This time he lay still, and the Shawnees laughed mockingly.

In the meantime the Delawares had fitted arrows to their bows, and were aiming them at the warriors who stood above Dancing Owl. Then, when the bow-strings were already

drawn taut, they suddenly realized what they were about to do.

"Stop!" commanded Running Fox, as he lowered his bow.

Spotted Deer hesitated. His face was dark with anger, and his eyes flashed dangerously. Running Fox reached out and grasped the hand which held the arrow. For an instant Spotted Deer rebelled.

"Are we women?" he demanded, fiercely.

"My brother, those are foolish words," Running Fox said, calmly. "We must help Dancing Owl. There is only one way to do that. We must fool the Shawnees. If we try to kill them before we get Dancing Owl away we will throw away his life. When we carry him off, then we will fight them. I am the leader. I have spoken. My brother, you must listen to my words."

"I will listen," agreed Spotted Deer.

"It is good," replied Running Fox. "Now I will tell you what I am going to do. First I am going to let Dancing Owl know that we are here."

"How will you do that?" Spotted Deer asked, anxiously.

"Wait here, and listen," said Running Fox.

The next moment he vanished into the night. He had disappeared as silently as a shadow, and Spotted Deer was at a loss to know which

way he had gone. He stared anxiously into the darkness, and strained his ears to catch the slightest clew. Running Fox, however, was moving as carefully and as quietly as Nianque, the lynx, and Spotted Deer failed to hear him.

In the meantime the Shawnees had ceased to abuse the prisoner, and Spotted Deer felt greatly relieved. Then, as Dancing Owl remained strangely quiet, in the position in which he had fallen, Spotted Deer wondered if the blow from the Shawnee had rendered him unconscious. The possibility alarmed him, for he knew that under those circumstances Running Fox would be risking himself in vain. Then he suddenly realized that Dancing Owl might be employing a clever ruse to avoid further attacks from his foes.

"Perhaps he is fooling them," Spotted Deer told himself.

He crouched in the shadows, as alert and cautious as a panther watching its prey. He had no idea how Running Fox planned to warn Dancing Owl, but he was prepared for any emergency.

"Pretty soon I will know about it," he kept telling himself.

It seemed a long time before his expectations were realized. Then he heard the call of Gokhos, the barred owl, close beside the camp. He believed it was a signal. However, as it seemed

to come from the top of a tree, and sounded perfectly natural Spotted Deer was perplexed. He kept sharp watch on the Shawnees. They had ceased talking, and appeared to be listening closely. Then he turned his eyes upon Dancing Owl. The latter, however, showed no interest.

A short interval of silence followed, and then the call was repeated. Spotted Deer watched the Shawnees in great suspense. They apparently found nothing suspicious about the cry, for they resumed conversation and showed no desire to investigate. Spotted Deer, however, was still in doubt.

When he finally heard the call the third time it seemed considerably farther away, and he feared that it really had come from the great night bird itself. However, it had barely begun before it ended abruptly as if the bird had suddenly been frightened. Spotted Deer nodded understandingly. He had recognized it as the rallying signal which the Delawares had agreed upon when they separated to search for game.

"Yes, it is Running Fox," he whispered.

The Shawnees, however, seemed to find nothing suspicious in the sudden interruption. In fact, one of the warriors about the fire called out a crude imitation of the cry, as if to lure the bird back to the vicinity of the camp.

Spotted Deer turned his attention upon Dancing Owl. If that unfortunate young warrior had heard the signal he was far too crafty to give the slightest hint to his foes. He appeared to be either unconscious or wrapped in heavy slumber, and the Shawnees took little notice of him.

Spotted Deer thrilled with pride as he realized how completely Running Fox had fooled the Shawnees. The fact that he, too, had been deceived by the clever imitation only increased his respect for the cleverness of his friend. He knew that Running Fox had carefully lowered his voice the last time to deceive the Shawnees into believing that the owl had discovered their fire and withdrawn from the vicinity of the camp.

"Running Fox is as sly as Woakus, the fox," he said.

At that moment Running Fox appeared beside him.

CHAPTER XIII

A DARING RESCUE

Running Fox listened eagerly while Spotted Deer related all that had happened during his absence. His heart filled with rage as he heard of the attack upon Dancing Owl. However, his anger was somewhat appeased by the satisfaction which he felt at outwitting the Shawnees. Still, he wondered if the ruse really had been successful. He looked anxiously at Dancing Owl. Had he understood the signal? Running Fox would have given much to know.

"Did you watch sharp for a sign?" he asked Spotted Deer.

"Yes, I kept watching, but he did not move," Spotted Deer told him.

"It is bad," declared Running Fox.

Dancing Owl lay as one dead. The Delawares were unable to guess whether he really was insensible or only feigning. The Shawnees took little notice of him. It was apparent that they considered it impossible for him to escape. However, when they finally prepared to sleep, one of them went over to the prisoner, and shook him roughly. Dancing Owl appar-

ently opened his eyes, for the Shawnee motioned for him to roll toward the group of warriors who had already spread their robes near the fire. When Dancing Owl showed no intention of obeying the command, the Shawnee seized him, and dragged him into the center of the company.

"Now we cannot help him," Spotted Deer said, gloomily.

"We must wait and watch," Running Fox declared, doggedly.

Aware that it would be folly to attempt to rescue Dancing Owl from his present position, the Delawares determined to take turns at watching until daylight. While one remained on guard, therefore, the other slept.

"See, the Shawnees are going away!" Spotted Deer said, excitedly, as he roused Running Fox at dawn.

The latter saw at once that the Shawnees were making preparations to depart. While a few broiled meat over the fire, their companions were busily engaged distributing and packing the results of the hunt.

"Yes, I believe they are going to their village," declared Running Fox. "We must follow them, and try to carry off Dancing Owl."

The Delawares knew that the Shawnee village was several days' travel toward the west, and they hoped to find an opportunity of freeing

Dancing Owl before the Shawnees reached their destination. When the latter finally set out on their journey, therefore, the Delawares followed closely on their trail.

Dancing Owl was placed near the head of the company. His arms were bound, and as a further precaution two stalwart warriors walked beside him. He rose promptly at the bidding of his captors, and accompanied them without protest, and his friends believed that he was attempting to throw the Shawnees off their guard.

"Dancing Owl is very sly," Spotted Deer said, hopefully. "Perhaps he will fool the Shawnees."

"Well, if he tries to get away we will be ready to help him," Running Fox told him.

The Delawares waited only long enough for the last of their foes to disappear, and then they moved cautiously on their trail. They did not follow directly behind them, but kept some distance at one side. They knew that scouts were sometimes sent back to make sure that no one was following, and they determined to take every precaution against blundering into a trap. Still, they had little difficulty in following the Shawnees. The latter were making sufficient noise to guide the sharp-eared young scouts, and the Delawares had little fear of losing them.

"They have left their canoes," Spotted Deer told Running Fox.

"Yes, I am thinking about it."

"What do you make of it?"

"I believe some of the hunters found those canoes," Running Fox told him. "Perhaps they took them from the Mohawks."

Spotted Deer appeared thoughtful. An interesting possibility had suggested itself. He stopped, and turned eagerly to Running Fox.

"My brother, perhaps I can tell you about it," he said. "Perhaps that scout who came to watch our camp was a Mohawk. Perhaps when he paddled away he went to meet a friend. Perhaps the Shawnees came upon them, and killed them. Perhaps they took their canoes."

For a moment or so Running Fox continued silent. He appeared to be weighing the possibility. Then his face lighted with interest.

"Spotted Deer, I believe that is true," he said, finally. "The Shawnees did not bring those canoes with them. They cannot take them away. Yes, I believe they must have taken them from the Mohawks. That would be good. Then the Shawnees do not know that our village is empty. If they killed the Mohawk scout, then the Mohawks will not know about our people. Spotted Deer, your words make me feel good inside."

They resumed their way in high spirits, for they believed that they had guessed the truth, and the deserted Delaware village would be safe from their foes. Then, when they had gone a considerable distance and failed to come within hearing of the Shawnees, they became suspicious. They wondered if the latter had suddenly become more cautious.

"Those old women have stopped their noise," Running Fox said, sarcastically. "Perhaps something has frightened them. We must watch sharp."

"It is mysterious," agreed Spotted Deer.

They advanced with great care, watching and listening for a clew of their foes. When they failed to locate them they wondered if they had blundered from the trail. It seemed to be the only solution.

"Perhaps they have gone some other way," suggested Spotted Deer.

"We must find out about it," Running Fox told him. "Come, we will look for their tracks."

They scouted cautiously until they found the trail. It continued directly toward the west, and was parallel with the course they had been pursuing. It was evident, therefore, that the Shawnees were still ahead of them. The tracks, however, had just been made, and the Delawares believed that their foes were within hear-

ing distance of them. They wondered what had suddenly made them silent.

"Perhaps they have found game," said Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps they have found enemies," replied Running Fox.

The thought made them wary. They turned from the trail, and concealed themselves to watch and listen. It was not long, however, before they heard a long, ringing shout. A moment afterward it was answered with a chorus of yells directly ahead of them. Then they heard a confused babel of voices.

"They have killed something," said Spotted Deer.

"It is good," declared Running Fox. "They will stop to cut up the meat. Then we will come up with them."

They moved stealthily in the direction of the sounds, and soon located the Shawnees beside a small woodland stream which flowed from the north. They were talking and laughing, and were apparently in a merry mood. The Delawares felt certain that they had killed more game. The idea filled them with envy, as they contrasted the success of the Shawnees with the misfortunes which had suddenly fallen upon the Delawares.

"Mauwallauwin, the Great Hunter, is good to our enemies," Spotted Deer said, bitterly.

"It is bad," replied Running Fox.

Determined to learn the cause of the merry-making, the Delawares moved noiselessly upon their foes. They advanced slowly along the stream until they saw the Shawnees. They were grouped about some object on the ground. Then, as the Delawares continued to watch, they saw a warrior rise in the center of the company with the fresh pelt of a black bear across his arm. He draped the skin about his shoulders, and strutted proudly before his comrades, who greeted him with shouts of approval.

"That man feels very big," said Running Fox. "He is telling his friends what a great fight he made. See, he is showing them how Machque rushed at him."

The hunter evidently was illustrating the story of his encounter with the bear. His gestures denoted that the battle had been fiercely fought, and it appeared that he had conducted himself with great skill and bravery. His companions seemed thoroughly to enjoy his boastful recital. Whenever he paused they immediately urged him to continue the story.

The Delawares, however, concentrated their attention upon Dancing Owl. The latter stood at the edge of the group about the story-teller, but showed little interest. He seemed to be closely watching the Shawnees, and whenever

he believed himself unobserved his eyes turned swiftly toward the forest. His maneuvers filled his tribesmen with hope. They believed that he had understood the signal, and was expecting aid from his friends.

"It is good," whispered Running Fox. "Dancing Owl is watching for a sign. Well, we will let him know that we are ready to help him."

Running Fox picked a stone from the edge of the stream, and tapped on the trunk of a dead pine to imitate the drumming of Papaches, the woodpecker. The imitation was perfect, and the Shawnees showed little interest in it. After a short interval, Running Fox repeated the signal.

"Now you must watch sharp," he told Spotted Deer.

Then he waded across the stream, and disappeared into the forest. Spotted Deer knew what he was about to do, and he waited in breathless suspense to learn the result of the stratagem. Long, anxious moments passed, and still the Shawnees lingered to satisfy the vanity of their tribesman. Then he again heard the drumming of Papaches, and it sounded a considerable distance away. This time, however, the signal suddenly ceased in the middle of a sharp resonant tattoo. It was the same rallying call of the Delawares, which Running

Fox had given with the notes of Gokhos, the great night bird.

As the sound ceased Spotted Deer stared anxiously at Dancing Owl. The latter, however, appeared to have missed the significance of the signal. Spotted Deer was keenly disappointed. He had been confident that Dancing Owl would understand. Then his gloom was suddenly turned to joy as the Delaware captive glanced furtively toward the spot where he had heard the summons.

"It is good, Dancing Owl knows about it," Spotted Deer said, eagerly, as Running Fox returned, a few moments later.

"It is good," replied Running Fox. "Now we are going to do something big."

Then he explained a daring plan to rescue Dancing Owl. Spotted Deer was amazed at the boldness of it. He saw at once that it was filled with peril, and that the slightest blunder would cost them their lives. Still he had no thought of hesitating. Dancing Owl, his tribesman, was going to certain death at the torture stake, and Spotted Deer was willing to risk his own life in an attempt to save him.

"My brother, I am ready," he told Running Fox.

"It is good," replied Running Fox.

They crossed the stream, and stole cautiously through the woods until they were directly op-

posite the Shawnees. Then they crawled through the undergrowth, and concealed themselves close to the edge of the water. The stream was almost an arrow-flight in width, and they planned to attack and demoralize the Shawnees while they were wading across. The Delawares hoped that Dancing Owl would be somewhere near the head of the company, and they resolved to make their attack the moment he stepped from the water.

"See, they are coming!" Spotted Deer whispered, eagerly.

"Get ready," Running Fox cautioned him.

They were overjoyed to see that Dancing Owl had been placed between the two foremost warriors. The Delawares waited until he was within bow-length of their hiding place, and then they raised the Delaware war-cry and shot their arrows. One of the warriors beside Dancing Owl sprawled forward into the water. The other reeled backward, clutching wildly at the arrow in his shoulder. Dancing Owl leaped into the bushes before the startled Shawnees thought of stopping him. Believing that they had been ambushed by a Delaware war-party, the Shawnees scrambled madly toward the opposite side of the stream, and took shelter in the woods.

As soon as his friends had cut the buckskin thongs which bound his arms, Dancing Owl rushed recklessly into the water, and secured

the weapons of the dead Shawnee. He turned and shook them defiantly at his foes, and then ran to join his comrades. The Delawares knew that the Shawnees would remain in concealment until they learned the strength of the force against them. They also knew that it would be folly to loiter another moment in the vicinity.

"Come, we must hurry away before they find out what has happened," said Running Fox.

"Which way shall we go?" Spotted Deer inquired, anxiously.

"Follow me," cried Running Fox.

He fled northward along the stream. Fearful that the Shawnees would soon guess the truth, and start in pursuit of them, he set a terrific pace, and his companions were forced to the utmost to keep up with him. He planned eventually to turn toward the eastward and return to the river, but he feared to cross the stream too near the scene of the attack.

"The Shawnees will send scouts both ways along the water," he said. "They will watch for our people to cross. We must keep going ahead."

"Yes, it is the best thing to do," agreed Spotted Deer.

The day was two-thirds gone, and they had little fear of being overtaken before nightfall. Then they believed it would be an easy task to make their way to the river.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BLIZZARD

The Delawares reached the river shortly after dark. They had seen nothing of their foes, and they wondered if the latter really had started in pursuit of them. It seemed quite probable that the Shawnees would at least follow them as far as the river.

"Yes, I believe the Shawnees will try to find us," declared Running Fox. "When they find out how we fooled them they will be very mad. I believe they will come to this water to look for us."

The thought made them anxious. They would have felt considerably safer across the river, but they saw no way of getting there. The weather had turned intensely cold, and they knew that it would be folly to attempt to swim across the wide expanse of icy water. Then they thought of the two canoes which the Shawnees had concealed in the undergrowth. However, they dismissed all idea of attempting to gain possession of them. They felt quite certain that the Shawnees would expect them to attempt just such a maneuver, and they believed

that several Shawnee scouts were already watching at the spot. Besides, having gained a substantial lead on their foes, they had no inclination to lose ground by returning down the river.

"No, my friends, we must keep going ahead," declared Running Fox. "Pretty soon the Shawnees will stop looking for us. They will go to their village. Then Dancing Owl can go to our people."

Dancing Owl looked inquiringly at his companions.

"You must go alone," Running Fox told him. "We have set out to do a big thing. I do not know what will come of it. Perhaps we shall be killed, but we are going ahead with it."

"Tell me about it," demanded Dancing Owl.

"No, we must not stop to talk," Running Fox warned him. "We must keep going ahead until the light comes. When we stop to rest perhaps I will tell you about it."

Dancing Owl asked no further questions. He knew that a warrior should appear neither anxious nor curious, and he feigned indifference. However, his heart burned with a desire to learn the perilous undertaking upon which his friends had embarked. Until Running Fox mentioned his mysterious mission, Dancing Owl had supposed that his companions had set out solely for the purpose of rescuing him from

the Shawnees. Now he wondered what had brought them, and how they had chanced to find him. Still he was determined to wait until they chose to tell him.

Then his thoughts were diverted by a strange, piercing cry which echoed ominously through the night. He had heard it several times before; once while he was hunting for game, and twice while he was with the Shawnees. This time, however, it seemed much closer at hand, and he noted that Running Fox and Spotted Deer listened anxiously.

"Do you know about that?" Running Fox asked him, as the call died away.

"No, my brother, I do not know about it, but I have heard it," replied Dancing Owl. "I believe it must be something bad. It frightened the Shawnees."

"Dancing Owl, it is the mysterious white Medicine Wolf," declared Running Fox. "I will tell you about it."

"Yes, yes, tell me about it," Dancing Owl said, eagerly.

At that moment they again heard the weird cry in the north, and it seemed even nearer than before. It filled them with vague, superstitious premonitions. To Running Fox and Spotted Deer it brought a challenge, to Dancing Owl it carried a warning of impending disaster. They listened some moments after the call had

ceased, and then as they heard nothing further they resumed their journey along the river.

The night was bitterly cold, and they had little desire to stop and rest. They knew from experience the discomforts of a fireless camp under such conditions, and they preferred to keep moving. They realized, too, that the Shawnees might enter the canoes, and paddle some distance up the river in search of them.

However, when dawn finally loomed up out of the east they were glad to stop. They were a long ways from the scene of their successful exploit against the Shawnees, and they felt quite certain that the latter had already abandoned the pursuit. Still they determined to take no unnecessary chances, and they went a considerable distance back from the river to choose a camp-site. They finally took shelter in a small grove of young pines. Feeling secure from their foes, they made a small fire, and when it had thoroughly heated the ground around it they extinguished the embers, and lay down upon the warm earth to sleep. Dancing Owl was thankful for the old elkskin robe which the Shawnees had given him in exchange for his own handsome robe of the black bear. They had tied the old robe upon his back when they set out for their camp.

It was midday when the young scouts finally

awakened. It was dark and wintry, and the air was filled with frost. They sprang nimbly to their feet, and jumped about and swung their arms to warm themselves. Then they made a fire, and warmed some of the dried meat which they had brought from the Delaware camp.

"We have come a long ways," said Running Fox. "It is good. I believe the Shawnees have turned back. We will stay here a little while. Then we can talk. Dancing Owl, I will tell you what you wish to know."

"I am waiting for your words," replied Dancing Owl.

Then as they sat close about the little fire Running Fox told of the misfortunes which had come upon the Delawares. Dancing Owl listened with bowed head. It was evident that the suffering of his people filled him with sorrow. Running Fox told how the Delawares had given up the missing hunter as dead, and he described the despair of the grief-stricken mother. Dancing Owl, however, showed no emotion. He believed that any display of feeling would weaken him in the eyes of his famous young tribesmen.

However, when Running Fox began the story of the mysterious white Medicine Wolf, Dancing Owl instantly became interested. Then, as he heard about the adventures of Fighting Elk

and his companions, his eyes flashed with excitement. The strange tale fascinated him. It also fired his imagination, and made him eager to join his friends in their hazardous undertaking.

"Running Fox, I have listened to your words," he said quietly as Running Fox finished speaking. "You have told me something big. It is a great thing to know about. But your words make my heart heavy. You say that our people have turned against that great Medicine Bundle which I see hanging from your belt. It is bad. Something has bewitched them. You say you are going to show them something good. You say you are going to fight the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. You are very brave. Spotted Deer is brave to go with you. My brother, I am brave enough to go with you. I will go."

"No, Dancing Owl, you must not do this thing," Running Fox told him. "You must go to our people. You must dry the eyes of your mother. We have given you your life. You must not throw it away."

"My brother, those are bad words," Dancing Owl said, hotly. "I will pull them from my ears. You are my friend. Spotted Deer is my friend. Both of you have risked your lives to help me. That is how I am here. Now I am going to help you. I will not listen to

any words against it. My brothers, if you send me away you will never see me again. I have spoken."

The threat made a great impression upon his friends. They knew that Dancing Owl was not one to make idle boasts, and his words filled them with alarm. They found it difficult to reach a decision. Under other circumstances they would have lost little time accepting his offer, for his ability and courage had already made him one of the famous warriors of his tribe. In the present instance, however, they hesitated about granting his request. There were several reasons. First, they saw no reason why Dancing Owl should deliberately risk his life in an expedition from which he had nothing to gain. Then, too, having rescued him from his foes they felt that it was their duty to persuade him to return to their people. They found it a difficult task. It soon became evident that Dancing Owl misjudged their motives, and believed that they considered him unworthy to accompany them. Once aware of his suspicions, his friends came to an immediate and favorable decision.

"Dancing Owl, I see that you feel bad about this thing," said Running Fox. "You are very brave. If you feel like going on this dangerous journey, then I will not say any more against it."

"It is good," replied Dancing Owl, as his face lighted with joy.

Then as they ate their rations of dried deer-meat he told how he had fallen into the hands of the Shawnees.

"When we separated to find game I went away with Laughing Beaver," said Dancing Owl. "We hunted hard till it got dark, but we did not see any game. When the light came we separated to look for tracks. I went a long ways but I did not see anything. When it got dark again it was very cold, and I made a little fire between two rocks. I did not see anything to make me afraid, so I lay down and went to sleep. Pretty soon something fell on me. I opened my eyes and tried to get up. Then I saw that some one was holding me down. That made me mad. I tried to fight, but it was useless. There were four warriors holding me down. Pretty soon they tied my hands and feet. Then they sat down around the fire, and I saw that they were Shawnees. When it got light they took me across the water in a canoe. Then they untied my feet, and took me to a place where some more Shawnees were waiting. I believed they intended to kill me, but I was not afraid. We stayed at that place until some more Shawnees came. They brought plenty of meat. Then when it was dark I heard the cry of Gokhos, the great night bird. I was

lying down, but I was watching the Shawnees. I saw that they were listening to the night bird. Then it stopped in the middle. I knew about it. It was a signal from my friends. That made me feel good, but I could not do anything. The Shawnees were watching me. They did not know about the signal. I was laughing at them. Well, my brothers, after that I kept watching for my people. Then I heard Papaches, the woodpecker. I listened sharp. Then it stopped in the middle. The Shawnees did not know about it. Then I knew that some one was trying to help me. I kept myself ready. Then you came."

"My brother, you are a Lenape," Running Fox said, proudly. "The Lenapes are too sharp for the foolish Shawnees. It is easy to catch Woakus, the fox, when he sleeps, but it is hard to keep him when he is awake."

Shortly afterward they set out toward the river. When they came in sight of the water they saw that the ice extended far out from the shore. They looked upon it with considerable satisfaction.

"It is good," said Running Fox. "Lowan, the Cold Monster, is helping us. See, he has set a trap for the Shawnees. They will not fall into it. No, they will turn back when they see what has happened. Come, my brother, we will go ahead."

"Everything is good for us," declared Spotted Deer. "It must be that the great Medicine Bundle is helping us."

"Yes, it is true," replied Running Fox. "Dancing Owl, you must tell our people about it."

"I will tell them how it brought you to the Shawnee camp," Dancing Owl declared. "Yes, I will tell them how it gave you power to drive back all those Shawnee warriors."

"My father will feel good about that," said Running Fox.

They gave no further thought to the Shawnees, for they felt certain that the latter were already well on their way toward the Shawnee village. However, the Delawares realized that they were approaching the hunting grounds of the Mohawks, and they knew that they must keep a sharp watch for those crafty foes.

"My brother, where do you expect to find the mysterious White Wolf?" Dancing Owl suddenly asked.

"I do not know where it is, but it cannot be far away," replied Running Fox. "One time we heard it near the village. We must listen, and watch for its tracks."

The day grew steadily colder, and Dancing Owl was compelled to keep rubbing his hands to prevent them from freezing, for the Shawnees had taken his muskrat skin mittens. He

was thankful, however, that they had left him possession of his beaver skin cap. Then as the day was drawing to its close they killed a large white hare, and when they stopped for the night Dancing Owl removed the pelt and made himself a rude pair of gloves.

They were huddled close together about their tiny fire when the cry of the great white Medicine Wolf suddenly broke the stillness. They were startled at its nearness. It seemed only a few arrow-flights away. They threw fresh fuel on the fire, and sat, bow in hand, peering anxiously into the dark.

"He is coming to fight us," whispered Spotted Deer.

"Nechasin, be watchful," cautioned Running Fox.

Three times the cry echoed shrilly in the frosty air, and then it ceased. The Delawares, however, continued on their guard. They recalled the words of old Sky Dog, telling how the crafty Medicine Wolf lingered at the edge of the Delaware camp to spring upon the warriors who went out to find it. They feared it was attempting to catch them in the same trap.

"Nechasin, be watchful," repeated Running Fox. "He is close by."

"Perhaps he is watching us," Dancing Owl said, uneasily.

"Yes, yes, I believe I saw his eyes!" declared Spotted Deer.

"Where?" Running Fox inquired quickly.

"Over there," said Spotted Deer.

They peered anxiously toward the spot, but failed to see anything. Then they listened for the sound of stealthy footsteps. A tree cracked sharply with frost, and they started nervously. The close proximity of the mysterious Medicine Creature filled them with superstitious awe. Running Fox unfastened the Mohawk medicine trophy, and held it in his hands. He was relying upon it to give him power over the strange Medicine Being. They watched and listened a long time, but nothing happened.

"I believe he has gone away," declared Dancing Owl. "Perhaps that great Medicine Bundle drove him off."

"It is the way he fooled those Lenape hunters," replied Running Fox. "Sky Dog told us about it. When they stopped at night the great white Medicine Wolf always called around them. That chased away the game. Then when they grew hungry and weak he brought his warriors and killed them. Perhaps he does not know that we have this meat. Perhaps he is driving away the game. Then he will come to kill us. Well, we will be strong and ready to fight. We will fool him."

"Do you believe that the great White Wolf

came here alone?" Dancing Owl asked Running Fox.

"Yes, I believe he came here alone to find out about us," replied Running Fox.

"When it grows light we will look for his tracks," proposed Spotted Deer.

They kept the fire burning, and took turns at watching until daylight. Then they scouted carefully about their camp-site to discover the trail of the White Wolf. The ground, however, was frozen hard and covered with a heavy white frost, and they soon realized that it would be useless to continue the search.

"Well, my brother, what is the best thing to do?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"We will keep hunting around this place until we find the mysterious Medicine Wolf," declared Running Fox.

They spent the day searching through the woods, but they saw no sign of the White Wolf and his pack. Toward the end of the day, however, Dancing Owl surprised and killed a fat young buck. He was greatly astonished when his friends warned him against using any of the meat.

"It is the work of the Medicine Wolf," Running Fox declared, suspiciously. "Yes, my brother, he has chased that buck here for us to kill. That is how he fooled our people long, long ago. The medicine-man warned the peo-

ple not to eat the meat. Then one of the young men took some of it, and he fell down dead. No, Dancing Owl, you must not eat this meat."

"Running Fox, I believe what you say is true," Spotted Deer said, solemnly. "It would be very foolish to eat that meat."

"My brothers, I will listen to your words," agreed Dancing Owl. "But I will skin this buck. Then I will cut up some of the hide, and make something to walk on when Lowan spreads the great white robe upon the ground."

"Yes, that is good," said Running Fox. "We will help you."

They soon removed the pelt, and then as the day was almost ended they returned to the camp-site where they had spent the previous night. Dancing Owl stopped on the way to cut two stout young willows. Then as they sat about the fire he bent the willow saplings into the form of the Delaware snowshoes. He tied the ends together with strips of sinew. Then he stretched deer hide over the frames. Thus he provided himself with a crude, but serviceable pair of snowshoes.

That night they again heard the White Wolf, but it seemed a considerable distance to the northward. They wondered if he had gone back to tell his people what he had seen.

"Perhaps he is calling us," said Spotted Deer.

"We will follow him," declared Running Fox.

They were awakened shortly before dawn by a great tempest which roared down from the north, and shook the wilderness with its force. It brought a fierce, biting cold that cut like the knife of a foe. The Delawares shivered, and cowered before the savage attack of Lowan, the Cold Monster.

"It is bad," cried Running Fox. "Lowan is shooting his arrows at us. They are passing through my robe. See, we are shaking like old women."

As soon as it grew light they looked anxiously at the sky. It was dark and stormy, and threatened snow. The possibility troubled them. They knew the peril of being overtaken by one of the great blizzards which raged through the forest at that season. Many Delaware warriors had lost their lives in those fierce tornadoes of wind, and snow, and shriveling cold. Running Fox himself had narrowly escaped in a harrowing experience which he had shared with his father. He had no desire to pass through the ordeal a second time, and as he noted all the signs of an approaching blizzard he was eager to find some haven of refuge.

"My friends, I do not like the way it looks up there," he said, pointing toward the sky.

"It is very cold. The wind is strong. It looks black up there. Pretty soon Lowan will fill the air with little white things. Then it will be hard to see. It will be hard to breathe. It will be hard to find our way. Come, we will look for some place to hide in."

His friends were somewhat surprised when Running Fox turned away from the river, and set out toward the west. He led them through the woods at a furious pace, and cast many uneasy glances at the lowering sky. He knew that once the storm broke it might continue several days, and transform the wilderness into a great white death-trap. He hoped to find shelter under an overhanging ledge somewhere along the low ridge which ran parallel with the river.

Before they had covered half of the distance, however, the storm broke upon them. It began with a sudden flurry of hard, icy snow crystals that swirled into their faces like a swarm of angry bees. Lowanachen, the fierce north wind, roared his challenge through the wilderness, and the great trees trembled and swayed beneath his attack.

"It is Machtapan, the great storm!" cried Running Fox, but his words were swept away by the wind.

The storm increased in fury each moment, and the forest was soon enveloped in a blinding

smother of wind-driven snow. The Delawares faced it with lowered heads, and continued doggedly toward the ridges. Running Fox knew that it would be folly to stop in the open woods, and he determined to keep traveling until he found shelter.

It was impossible to see more than a bow-length or so through the stifling clouds of snow. The Delawares kept close together to guard against becoming separated, for at times they entirely lost sight of one another. Then they would shout, and Running Fox would immediately stop and call them to him.

"Wait! Wait! Dancing Owl has disappeared!" Spotted Deer cried, excitedly.

Running Fox turned in alarm. He saw Spotted Deer staggering toward him through the weird white haze. There was no one behind him.

"Call him! Call him!" shouted Running Fox.

They united their voices in the ringing war-cry of their people, but it sounded weak and futile in the fury of the tempest. Then they listened anxiously. Their ears were filled with the wild tumult of Machtapan, the great storm. They shouted again and again, but only the wind replied. They continued to call, however, hoping that Dancing Owl might catch one of the signals. Then, when they had almost abandoned hope, he suddenly found them.

"You have come, it is good," said Running Fox. "How did you come to go away?"

"I was right behind Spotted Deer, and then I fell down. When I got up I could not see him," Dancing Owl explained.

"It is Machtapan, the great storm," Running Fox told his companions. "We must keep close together. There is only one way to do it. Spotted Deer, you must hold fast to the end of my bow. Dancing Owl, you must hold fast to the bow of Spotted Deer. Then fierce Lowanachen cannot pull us away."

Thus they fought their way against the blizzard. It was slow, painful traveling, and at times they were forced to stop and take shelter behind the trees to regain their breath. However, they realized that it would be fatal to loiter, for the day was far along, and the storm appeared to be increasing in violence. The snow was already more than ankle deep, and the wind was sweeping it into little mounds which would grow into huge drifts by nightfall. The Delawares knew that unless they soon found shelter, it would not be long before the storm would exhaust their strength. The thought roused them to great effort. They pushed forward at a desperate pace, hoping to find a hiding place somewhere along the rocky ridge toward which they were struggling.

Then when they finally reached it, and clam-

bered toilfully up the bare, wind-swept slope, the storm assailed them with increased fury. Having reached their goal, however, they determined to fight on until they found some sort of shelter. Then an alarming possibility confronted them. Suppose they should fail. They weakened at the thought. They knew that failure meant death.

"No, no, we will not die," Running Fox said, stubbornly, through clenched teeth. "Pretty soon we will find a place to hide in. We are warriors. We must be brave. We must fight to keep alive."

His words revived the spirits of his comrades, and they followed him with new hope. He continued along the sheltered side of the ridge, hoping to stumble upon a rocky cavern, or a projecting ledge, where they might take shelter. He was trusting blindly to chance for it was impossible to see a bow-length through the dense mist of drifting snow.

"It is useless. It is useless," murmured Spotted Deer. "Fierce Lowan will bury us under his great white robe."

Dancing Owl stumbled along in grim, stolid silence. He, too, had grave fears that they were doomed to perish in the raging tempest of wind and snow.

Running Fox, however, still had hopes of escape. There were two reasons for his confi-

dence. First, because he had already passed safely through a similar experience. Then, too, he still had strong faith in the power of the sacred Mohawk Medicine Bundle.

However, as the day drew swiftly to its end, and he felt his strength rapidly leaving him, he, too, began to lose confidence. At that moment Spotted Deer relaxed his hold on the bow, and Running Fox turned to see him dropping to his knees.

"Come! Come! You must keep moving!" Running Fox cried, impatiently.

"No, my brother, it is foolish," Spotted Deer said, weakly. "We have come a long ways. My legs are heavy. Come, we will rest here."

Running Fox and Dancing Owl raised him to his feet, and urged him forward. Then, like three white specters from the Shadow World, the Delawares staggered on into the gathering gloom. Their bodies were crusted with ice and snow, their faces were white with frost, and their weary limbs sagged beneath them. They had fought a heroic battle against terrific odds, and now they were tottering on the verge of collapse. Still they had no thought of surrender. Pluckily, doggedly, defiantly, they fought their way forward against the storm. The snow was almost to their knees, and in many places they floundered through drifts waist deep. Still they made no attempt to use

their snowshoes. Their one thought was to keep moving. They knew that if they once stopped they might not be able to rouse themselves to renew their efforts.

"My brothers,—it—is getting—dark," Running Fox stammered, weakly. "We—must—watch——"

He ceased speaking, and pointed excitedly ahead of him. A long, dark object had suddenly loomed up through the snow. Scarcely daring to hope, they floundered forward with wild, questioning eyes. A moment later they scrambled joyfully into a great roomy cavern beneath a long, projecting ledge of rock.

CHAPTER XV

A FRESH TRAIL

Once aware that they were safe, the Delawares quickly rallied from their exhaustion. They found themselves in a low roomy cavern at the base of a massive ledge. The shelter appeared to be several arrow-flights in length, and five or six bow-lengths in width, and as it was on the leeward side of the ridge it was snug and free from snow. A heavy carpet of leaves had drifted into it, and some dead branches which had fallen from the trees growing along the top of the ledge. For the moment, however, the Delawares had neither time nor inclination to explore the place. Darkness was already settling down, and their first thought was to protect themselves against the piercing cold.

"See, here is wood," Running Fox cried, gayly. "Now we will soon be warm."

He shook the snow from his garments, and freed himself from his pack and snowshoes. Then he carefully unwrapped his fire-sticks, and was overjoyed to find his tinder safe and dry. In the meantime his comrades had slipped

their packs, and Spotted Deer had gathered a small supply of dry wood for the fire. It was some time, however, before Running Fox could summon sufficient strength to manipulate the fire-drill. After a number of attempts he finally succeeded in producing a little pile of charred wood dust which he carefully fanned into a glow. He carried it to the little mound of leaves and sticks which Spotted Deer had prepared. A moment later the camp-fire blazed into life.

"It is good," Running Fox said, thankfully, as they huddled close about the flames.

"Fierce Lowan cannot harm us now," declared Dancing Owl.

"Running Fox, my words have come true," Spotted Deer said, weakly. "Everything has turned good for us. It must be that the great Medicine Bundle is helping us."

As the fire gained strength, and shed its warmth upon them, the exhausted young scouts suddenly forgot the great storm that was raging in unabated fury at the edge of their shelter. The crackle of the flames drove the noise of the tempest from their ears, and they lost all fear of Lowan, the Cold Monster, and his blustering ally, Lowanachen, the north wind.

They shook the snow from their robes, and spread them to dry before the fire. Then they

produced generous rations of dried meat, and heated it before the flames. It warmed them and gave them new strength. Their fears instantly took flight, and their hearts filled with confidence.

"Hi, Lowanachen, we hear you making a great noise out there, but you cannot frighten us," laughed Running Fox. "You thought you were going to catch us, but we fooled you. Now you cannot reach us. We will stay here until you go away."

Then, as if to rebuke him for his boast, the piercing wail of the great White Wolf rose above the tumult of the storm. He seemed to be directly before the ledge, and the Delawares instantly became silent. They seized their weapons, and kept sharp watch at the edge of the firelight. For some moments they heard only the roar of the wind, the cracking of branches, and the soft ominous hissing of drifting snow. Then the weird, startling cry of the Medicine Wolf mingled in the wild confusion of the night. A moment afterward it was answered by the familiar howl of Timmeu, the gaunt gray timber wolf. The Delawares looked at one another in astonishment. It was the first time that the mysterious cry had brought a response.

"Perhaps the Medicine Wolf sent fierce Lowan to drive us into a trap," said Spotted

Deer. "Now perhaps the great White Leader is calling his warriors to fight us."

"Well, we are in a good place," replied Running Fox. "We can make a strong fight."

"My brothers, I am thinking about something different," Dancing Owl told them. "Perhaps the mysterious white Medicine Wolf lives in this place."

Running Fox and Spotted Deer were startled by the possibility. They looked uneasily into the darkness which concealed the rest of the ledge. They wondered if the strange Medicine Creature and his people really lived there. Perhaps some of them were watching from the shadows. Perhaps they were lying just beyond the firelight, awaiting the signal from their leader to rush in and destroy the bold intruders who had blundered into their stronghold.

"Dancing Owl, your words may be true," said Running Fox. "We cannot see what is over there in the dark. Perhaps there are many wolves hiding in that place. We must keep a sharp watch until it grows light. Then we will know about it."

The cries had ceased, and the Delawares wondered whether the Medicine Wolf had gone away, or crept stealthily into the other end of the ledge. As they had no way of learning, they determined to be prepared for a sudden

attack. While two kept guard at the edge of the firelight, therefore, the other moved cautiously about gathering the available supply of dry wood. They piled it close beside the fire for use during the night. Then they agreed that two should sleep while one kept watch.

They passed safely through the night, however, and at daylight they saw that the storm had ceased. Once awake, their first thought was thoroughly to explore the ledge beneath which they had taken shelter. They made a number of interesting discoveries. At several spots slabs of rock had fallen from the roof of the cavern, and piled up before the ledge, affording ideal barricades for defense against attack. The Delawares realized that with little effort these defenses could be strengthened, so that one or two determined warriors might hold off a vastly superior number of foes.

"It is good," said Running Fox. "If our enemies come here we will crawl behind these rocks, and make a big fight."

Then as they advanced farther along the shelter they came upon a slight depression in the ground which was partly filled with ashes and charred wood. The roof of the ledge above it was blackened by smoke, and they knew that many fires had been made at that spot. However, a careful examination con-

vinced them that a long time had passed since the last fire was kindled there.

"Hi, here is something different," cried Dancing Owl.

He was brushing the dust from the rear wall of the shelter. Then he showed his companions several crude figures which had been scratched upon the rock. One looked like the image of a bear, but the marks had apparently been there a long time, and the Delawares were unable to interpret them. Nevertheless, the discovery convinced them that the place was visited at certain seasons by some of their foes. They had little doubt that it was a rendezvous of the Mohawks, on some of their hunting and fishing expeditions.

"See," cried Spotted Deer, "I have found some bones. They have been cracked open. There must have been old people at this camp. They always eat the soft meat inside of the bones. My brothers, if the old people came here then this place cannot be far from a big camp. Old people do not travel far."

"Those are good words," agreed Running Fox, as he knelt to examine the débris which Spotted Deer had unearthed from the fireplace.

"Perhaps some old man came here to talk with the strange Medicine Creatures," suggested Dancing Owl.

"My brothers, these bones are dried up.

They have been here a long time," declared Running Fox, as he snapped one of the fragments between his fingers. "The ashes are old. I believe that many moons have passed since any one stopped here."

"It looks true," replied Spotted Deer.

Then, farther along the ledge, they found a second fireplace, larger than the first. It was in the center of the shelter, and a low barricade of rocks had been piled up on three sides of it. They found more fragments of charred bones at that spot, and what was still more interesting they found a number of small pieces of clay pottery. Some of it was decorated with crude designs which Running Fox and Spotted Deer instantly recognized.

"Now I know who comes to this place," declared Running Fox. "Yes, my brothers, it is our enemies the Mohawks. These are their marks. We saw these marks in the great Mohawk camp."

"It is true," agreed Spotted Deer.

Having made certain the identity of the people who visited the ledge, the Delawares determined to be on their guard. However, they had little fear of their foes coming to the ledge at that particular time. They believed that the great storm would keep them within close range of the Mohawk village, which they knew was several days' travel to the northward.

"Well, my brothers, now we know about this place," said Spotted Deer, when they had completed their explorations. "We know that the mysterious white Medicine Wolf does not live here. We have found the camp-fires of our enemies the Mohawks. It is good. We will be as watchful as Woakus, the fox."

"Now I am going to look for the tracks of the great White Wolf," Running Fox told them.

"Yes, we will look around and see what we can find," said Dancing Owl.

The day was dark and cold, and the gloomy sky threatened more snow. The wind, however, had entirely subsided, and a soothing calm had settled upon the wilderness. The Delawares planned to spend the day hunting about the vicinity of the ledge. They knew that any tracks which the White Wolf and his companions might have left the previous night had been entirely obliterated by the storm, but they hoped to find a fresh trail.

They found it necessary to use their snowshoes, as the snow was knee-deep on the level, and double that depth in the gullies and drifts. Dancing Owl gave his friends great amusement as he started out on his improvised snowshoes of deer-hide. However, he soon proved that they were as serviceable as those of his companions.

"If the Medicine Wolf smells your tracks he will take you for Achtu, the deer," said Running Fox, with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

"Well, if he follows me he will find out something different," replied Dancing Owl.

They made their way to the top of the ridge to reconnoiter the surrounding country. Their first concern was to learn if it sheltered their foes, and they scanned the sky for traces of smoke. Then, as they saw nothing to make them suspicious, their thoughts turned upon the mysterious White Wolf. Where had he gone? Where did he stay? How could they find him? The questions were difficult to answer.

"There is only one way to do this thing," said Running Fox. "We will keep moving around until we find his trail. Perhaps it will take a long time, but it is the best thing to do."

As they had heard the White Wolf toward the north, they set out in that direction. They kept to the top of the ridge, for the wind had swept away much of the snow, and it offered easier traveling. At midday, however, they descended cautiously into a dense forest of spruces. It looked like a splendid shelter for game, and they believed that the White Wolf and his pack might have made it their rendezvous.

"I know this place," Running Fox said, soon

after they entered the timber. "Spotted Deer, look around you."

"Yes, my brother, I have been here before," declared Spotted Deer. "It is the place where we climbed a tree to hide from the Mohawks."

They recognized the dense forest as the spot where they had hidden themselves to escape a company of Mohawk scouts, whom they encountered on their journey toward the Mohawk camp the previous year. For the moment the discovery filled them with joy, for having found the familiar landmark, they knew exactly where they were. Then they suddenly recalled that the spot was a popular hunting ground of the Mohawks. The thought instantly made them serious. Still, as they also knew that the great Mohawk village was a long journey toward the north, they believed there was slight chance of encountering their foes.

"No, I do not believe they will come here," declared Spotted Deer. "They have finished the great hunt. Lowan has spread the white robe upon the earth. It is hard to travel. The Mohawks will stay in the village."

At that moment Dancing Owl hailed them. He had advanced some distance ahead of them while they stopped to talk. They hurried to him, and found him greatly excited.

"My brothers, I have found the trail of the

Medicine Wolf," he cried. "It is fresh. He cannot be far away."

"Where is it?" Running Fox inquired, eagerly.

"Over here by this big tree," said Dancing Owl.

He led them to the spot, and they saw the fresh paw-marks of the wolf, leading away toward the west. The tracks were of unusual size, and they had little doubt that they had been made by the mysterious Medicine Creature himself. The trail showed that the wolf had been moving at a slow trot. Aware that the tracks had been made that day, the Delawares immediately set out to follow them.

"Perhaps he is trying to lead us into a trap," warned Running Fox. "It is the way he fooled those hunters long, long ago. We must be cautious."

CHAPTER XVI

AT BAY

They followed the trail until dark, but failed to overtake the wolf. Several times it had slowed to a walk, and once it had stopped and squatted on its haunches to rest. Then the trail suddenly turned, and circled back toward the ledge, so that when they finally abandoned the hunt at nightfall the Delawares found themselves within a short distance of their starting place. They returned to the ledge with heavy hearts.

"If we had watched around here we might have caught him," Spotted Deer said, gloomily.

"No, my brother, he would not have come," Running Fox told him.

"Do you believe that he knew where we were?" Dancing Owl asked.

"Yes, I believe he is trying to catch us," declared Running Fox. "It is the way he killed the Lenape hunters."

It was cold and still, and the Delawares sat about their fire, listening expectantly for the cry of the Medicine Wolf. The night was well

advanced before they heard it. Then it sounded somewhere near the spot where they had abandoned the trail. After it had ceased, the wild baying of the wolf pack filled the forest. The Delawares looked at one another in alarm.

"He has brought his warriors," said Running Fox. "We must be ready."

However, the commotion soon died out in the distance, and it was evident that the wolves were going away. The Delawares were perplexed. They wondered if the great White Leader was carrying out some clever bit of stratagem. The possibility made them wary, and they determined to take every precaution. They kept watch through the night, but the White Wolf and his pack failed to appear.

Shortly after dawn the Delawares left the ledge, and hurried away to follow the trail. They found a wide, firmly packed runway through the snow. It showed the tracks of many wolves. It was apparent that the great pack had raced through the night on the trail of the mysterious White Leader.

"Now it will be easy to follow them," said Running Fox.

They hurried along the trail. For a short distance it continued toward the south, and then it turned sharply toward the west. The Delawares saw that it was leading toward a heavily

timbered ravine, and they feared that the crafty Medicine Wolf might be attempting to lure them into an ambush.

"We must watch sharp," warned Running Fox. "Perhaps the wolves are hiding along the sides of those ridges. If we go down there into that low place perhaps they will rush down and trap us. We must find out about it before we go ahead. I am the leader. I will tell you what to do. You must stay here, and watch. I will circle around, and come up on the other side of that place. Then I will look to see if the wolves have gone ahead. If the way is clear, I will call you. If you do not hear me, then you will know that the wolves are hiding down there. Then you must wait here until I come back. Now I am going away."

"Running Fox, you are the leader; we will do as you tell us," said Spotted Deer.

Running Fox went a considerable distance toward the south before he attempted to cross the ravine. He crossed safely, however, and saw no signs of the wolf pack. Then he moved cautiously along the top of the gorge, and when he approached the spot where the wolves should have crossed he made another detour. The precaution was needless, for he found the wolf trail an arrow-flight beyond the top of the ravine. The pack had gone on. Running Fox called his companions.

"My friends, the White Wolf and his warriors have gone ahead," said Running Fox. "We must follow them. When they stop we will creep up to them, and try to kill the great White Leader."

"He is a Medicine Person. It will be hard to kill him," Dancing Owl said, doubtfully.

"My brother, what you say is true," replied Running Fox. "But I have brought the great Medicine Bundle of the Mohawks. I believe it is stronger than the mysterious White Wolf. Yes, my friends, I believe it will give me power to kill that great Medicine Person."

His companions remained silent. They were not quite so sure of success. However, their confidence in the ability and courage of Running Fox made them hopeful. They had little fear of fighting the White Wolf and his pack, under the leadership of the famous young warrior with whom they had enlisted. They hurried along the trail, ready and eager to risk their lives against the powerful Medicine Creature which had filled their people with so many superstitious fears.

The wolves, however, showed no inclination to stop, and the Delawares were thoroughly disheartened at the end of the day when the trail again turned and led them back toward the ledge. It appeared that the wolf pack was circling about the locality, hunting for game.

"It is the thing Sky Dog told us about," Running Fox declared, wearily, as they returned to the ledge at dark. "The Medicine Wolf is running off the game. He is trying to frighten us away."

That night the wolves grew bolder, and came close up to the front of the ledge. The Delawares kept near the fire, and peered uneasily into the shadows, as the dismal cry sounded within bow-shot of them.

"They have found our trail, and followed us here," said Spotted Deer.

"Be cautious," warned Running Fox. "The Medicine Wolf is trying to call us out there into the darkness."

"See, see, there is a wolf looking at us!" Dancing Owl cried, excitedly.

They saw the momentary flash of two green eyes, and then it disappeared. A few moments later they thought they saw a dark, skulking form at the edge of the firelight. As they aimed their arrows, it, too, faded into the night.

"They are waiting for the fire to go down," said Dancing Owl.

Then for the first time the Delawares suddenly realized their peril. Their supply of fuel was limited, and they had burned it recklessly to keep the pack from rushing into the ledge. Now, as the wolves showed no intention of leaving, the alarmed young hunters saw that

they would exhaust their wood long before daylight. There was no more within range of the firelight. To venture into the darkness would be fatal. Their predicament seemed serious.

"It looks bad," Running Fox said, seriously. "The great white Medicine Wolf has run us into a trap. I believe that many of his warriors are hiding out there in the darkness. What Dancing Owl says is true. They are waiting until the fire fades out. Then the great White Leader will give his war-cry, and they will rush in here to kill us. Well, my friends, we are warriors. We must fight hard. We must try to kill the mysterious Medicine Wolf. It will be hard to see him, but we must watch sharp. Now we will try to fool them. We will make a big fire. We will send the light far out there in the darkness. Perhaps it will frighten them away."

They placed fresh fuel on the fire, and it was not many moments before the half-circle of light spread farther into the night. The Delawares watched eagerly for a glimpse of their crafty foes, but the wolves kept safely in the shadows. They had subsided into silence, and the lads wondered if they had gone. It seemed doubtful. They believed that the Medicine Wolf was trying to deceive them.

"Yes, he is waiting out there to catch us," said Running Fox.

Then they were amazed to hear the familiar cry ringing through the night, far away toward the north. They could scarcely believe their ears. They turned to one another with questioning eyes.

"I do not believe it," said Spotted Deer. "The great White Leader is a big Medicine Person. I believe he has sent his voice flying through the woods, but he is out there watching us."

"It is mysterious," agreed Running Fox.

However, as time passed, and they heard nothing further from the wolves, they began to believe that they actually had withdrawn. Still they feared to take it for granted. They kept the fire burning briskly, and continued to watch. Then, when the last of their wood had finally been burned, Running Fox and Spotted Deer seized blazing brands and advanced boldly along the ledge in search of fuel. They returned safely, with sufficient wood for the balance of the night.

"We heard nothing. We saw nothing. The wolves have gone away," Running Fox told Dancing Owl.

"It is good," replied Dancing Owl.

They took turns at watching, but they were not disturbed. The following day they found the tracks of the wolves within easy bow-range of the ledge. The wolves had trotted to and

fro before the shelter, and several had ventured close to the edge of the firelight. Guided by a comparison of the footprints, the Delawares decided that one of those daring scouts was the great White Wolf himself.

Once again they set out to follow the trail. This time it led directly toward the north, and the Delawares wondered if the wily Medicine Wolf was attempting to decoy them into the stronghold of their foes, the Mohawks.

"Yes, it may be true," replied Running Fox, when his companions suggested the possibility. "Well, my brothers, that will not make me turn back. I have set out to fight the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. I am going ahead no matter what comes of it."

"I will go with you," Spotted Deer said, quietly.

"Dancing Owl, how do you feel about it?" inquired Running Fox.

"My brother, I am ready to follow you," replied Dancing Owl.

They had not gone far on the trail before they noticed that the wolves had slackened their pace to a walk. The discovery filled them with hope. They believed that the White Wolf and his pack were growing tired.

"Pretty soon they will stop," said Spotted Deer. "Then they will go to sleep. Then per-

haps we will be able to creep up to them, and kill the great White Leader."

"No, I do not believe it," replied Running Fox. "I believe they will be waiting for us. We must be very cautious."

Then, a short distance farther on, the trail showed that the pack had again broken into a run. A few moments later the Delawares heard a wild baying, directly ahead of them. They recognized it at once as the hunting cry of the wolf pack. It was evident that the wolves had struck a fresh game trail. However, the cry of the White Wolf was missing from the chorus.

"Perhaps he has gone away," suggested Dancing Owl.

At that moment the haunting wail rang through the forest. It rose above the excited yelping of the pack, and sounded a sinister warning to the Delawares. They hurried on, eager to learn what sort of game the wolves had roused from cover.

"Hi, it is Achtu," cried Running Fox, as he discovered the fresh tracks of a large buck. "The great white robe will hold him back. See, he is sinking far down in it. The wolves will soon catch him. It is good. They will stop to eat. Then we will come up with them."

The Delawares studied the trails with great interest. They noted that the deer had been

walking when the wolves discovered its tracks. Then, farther on, they saw where the deer had suddenly stopped, and wheeled about. It evidently had heard the dreaded wolf call, and had turned for a moment to listen. Then a great bound showed that it had instantly realized its peril, and had begun the wild race for life. The snow was deep, and the buck sank above its knees at each jump. The wolves, however, seemed able to travel with slight difficulty. It was evident, therefore, that the race would be short.

The Delawares had not gone more than a dozen arrow-flights farther when they heard sounds which told them that the unfortunate deer had been overtaken by its savage pursuers. It was evident that the wolves had surrounded their victim, and shut off all possible chance of escape. They were apparently maneuvering for an opportunity to rush in, and drag the deer to its death.

"Come," cried Running Fox. "They have caught Achtu. Now we will catch them."

He hurried recklessly toward the sounds of battle, and his friends followed close behind him. The deer had been brought to bay in a wide strip of open swamp or marshland, and the Delawares realized that it would be difficult to approach within bow-shot without being seen. However, they feared that it might be

their only opportunity to get within bow-range of the White Wolf and his band, and they determined to take the chance. They hoped to surprise the wolves while they were flushed with excitement over the capture of the deer.

"Perhaps when they see us they will run out on the other side of this place," said Dancing Owl.

"No, I do not believe they will run out," replied Running Fox. "I am thinking about something different. Perhaps that sly Medicine Wolf is trying to catch us. Perhaps he is leading us into this place to kill us. There are no trees here. We must fight on the ground. It is bad."

"I believe there are many wolves in this place, it will be a big fight," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, my brothers, I am going ahead with it," Running Fox declared, grimly.

"I am ready," said Spotted Deer.

"I am ready," said Dancing Owl.

The next moment they advanced boldly into the swamp. They soon heard sounds which told them that the wolves had dragged the deer to its death, and that they were snarling and fighting about the carcass. The Delawares approached with great caution. They hoped to find and attack the great White Leader before the pack discovered them. When they were almost upon them, however, the wolves suddenly

caught their scent, and immediately rushed to attack them.

"Get ready, they are coming!" cried Running Fox.

A moment afterward they found themselves surrounded. Having discovered the identity of their foes the wolves had instantly become cautious. Instead of rushing recklessly forward to attack them, they separated and circled warily about them to investigate.

"Nechasin, be watchful," warned Running Fox. "Pretty soon they will rush in."

"Gischenaxin, we are ready," Spotted Deer told him.

"Do you see the White Leader?" Dancing Owl asked, eagerly.

"No, I do not see him," replied Running Fox.

The swamp was covered with a heavy growth of low bushes, and it was difficult to see the wolves as they passed rapidly through the cover. They kept well within bow-range, but the Delawares determined to save their arrows for use at closer quarters. Their one idea was to discover the mysterious white Medicine Wolf, and they watched anxiously as the sinister gray forms flashed across the openings in the undergrowth. Then, as they failed to discover the famous leader, they wondered if he had left the pack. The possibility worried them. They

feared that the wily creature might have made them the victims of some clever ruse. They had little time to think about it, however, for the wolves were yelping excitedly, and appeared to be rousing themselves to make an attack.

"Pretty soon the fight will begin," said Dancing Owl.

"They will wait for the cry of their leader," declared Running Fox.

Then they caught a glimpse of the mysterious Medicine Wolf as he passed swiftly across an open place. He was gone before they could study him. They noted, however, that he was big, and white, and threatening. For an instant only they saw the glint of his cruel green eyes as he glared savagely from the bushes. The next moment he slunk from sight.

The Delawares asked themselves why they had not attempted to kill him. They were forced to confess that the mere sight of the famous Medicine Creature had suddenly confused them. For the moment they seemed to have been dazed, and incapable of action. The thought alarmed them. They wondered if the great White Wolf had bewitched them.

Then they heard his voice rising menacingly in the war-cry, and they prepared for an attack. However, as the moments passed, and the wolves failed to show themselves, the Dela-

wares feared that the crafty brutes were creeping stealthily forward under cover of the undergrowth. They watched anxiously, and when they saw the tops of the bushes swaying suspiciously they knew that their fears were true. Then a gaunt gray form appeared at the edge of the cover. It stopped a moment, and exposed its cruel white fangs in an ugly snarl. Spotted Deer shot his arrow, and the wolf rose unsteadily on its hind legs, and pawed wildly at the air. Then it toppled backward into the bushes. Spotted Deer felt certain that he had killed it.

Soon afterward the Medicine Wolf again sounded the war-cry, and the wolves rushed recklessly upon their foes. The Delawares were prepared, however, and the wolves were repulsed, and completely demoralized. They slunk into cover, leaving a number of dead and dying companions behind them. The Delawares were greatly elated at their success. The victory gave them confidence. As the mysterious white Medicine Wolf had failed to annihilate them at the first fierce onslaught they had hopes of successfully resisting him. Still, they were suspicious of him. They believed that at any moment he might make use of some strange power to destroy them.

"We must keep watching," said Running Fox. "The great White Leader is a Medicine

Person. Perhaps he will call some of the Evil People to help him."

The wolves, however, showed little inclination to renew the attack. They contented themselves with yelping and snarling, and skulking cautiously about their enemies. The White Leader had subsided into silence, and the Delawares wondered what he was planning to do.

"Perhaps they will keep us here until it grows dark," suggested Spotted Deer.

"No, no, we must not let them do that," Running Fox declared promptly.

The thought was alarming. The Delawares had been discovered and surrounded in an open part of the swamp, and they knew that unless they drove off the wolves before night they would have little chance to escape. As the day was considerably more than half gone, they were eager to finish the fight at the earliest possible moment.

"If the great White Leader comes in sight I am going out to fight with him," Running Fox declared suddenly. "If I kill him I believe the wolves will run away."

"Hi, my brother, the Medicine Wolf has heard your words," Spotted Deer told him.

The familiar cry had sounded within easy bow-range as soon as Running Fox had ceased speaking. It was a strange coincidence which convinced the superstitious Delawares that the

White Wolf had accepted the challenge. They peered anxiously into the brush, but the wolf failed to show himself. Then as the cry again sounded forth Running Fox unfastened the sacred Mohawk medicine trophy from his belt, and shook it defiantly above his head.

"Hi, you great Medicine Person!" he shouted, excitedly. "I hear you. You sound very fierce, but I am not afraid of you. Do you see this thing which I am holding in my hand? It is the great Medicine Bundle which I took from my enemies the Mohawks. It is very strong. It gives me power to do great things. When I hold it in my hand I am a great Medicine Person. Nothing can harm me. It gave me power to kill the great chief Standing Wolf. It will give me power to kill you. I have come a long ways to fight you, because I knew I could kill you. Before you die you must know who I am. I am Running Fox. My father is Black Panther, the great war-chief of the Lenapes. Now I am coming to kill you."

"Wait! Wait!" Spotted Deer cried in alarm.

Running Fox refused to listen. Hastily fastening the medicine trophy to his belt, he fitted an arrow to his bow, and moved carefully toward the place where the White Wolf was concealed. He had barely taken three strides, however, before the Medicine Wolf raised the

war-cry, and sprang from cover. As Running Fox shot his arrow, the entire pack rushed forward in a furious attack.

"Hold them back! Hold them back! I will kill the leader!" cried Running Fox.

Then the terrific battle to the death began. Desperately wounded, the great White Wolf sprang upon Running Fox, and bore him to the ground. At the same moment his friends rallied to his aid, and fought valiantly to hold off the pack. They shot their arrows with deadly effect, and the foremost wolves were killed in their tracks, or so desperately wounded that they floundered helplessly into the cover to die. At sight of them the balance of the pack lost courage. They wavered an instant or so listening for the call of their leader. Then as the Delawares pressed their advantage, the wolves gave way, and fled from range.

In the meantime Running Fox and the Medicine Wolf were fighting to a finish. As the wolf bore him to the ground, Running Fox dropped his bow and drew his knife. Then, as the wolf snapped at his throat, he drove the knife deep behind its shoulder. The wolf turned to seize his hand, and he plunged the knife into its neck. Then as they thrashed wildly about in the snow, Running Fox found two more opportunities to use his knife. When

his comrades found time to rush to his assistance, he was already rising to his feet.

"Well, my brothers, there lies the mysterious white Medicine Wolf," he panted. "I have killed him."

CHAPTER XVII

MOHAWKS!

For some moments the Delawares stood gazing incredulously upon the body of the great white Medicine Wolf. It was difficult to believe that it was dead. A haunting, superstitious fear still lingered in their hearts. They almost expected to see the strange creature rise to its feet, and destroy them. However, as it continued lifeless, and they finally realized that it actually was dead, they were thrown into an ecstasy of joy. Standing close together, they threw back their heads and united their voices in the thrilling war-cry of their people. Then they began to dance excitedly about the carcass, shaking their weapons before the snarling face, and singing the Lenape songs of victory. Carried away with enthusiasm, they abandoned their usual caution, and celebrated the victory with keen, boyish delight.

"Hi, my brothers, this is bad," Running Fox suddenly exclaimed. "We are very foolish. We have stopped thinking about the wolves. Perhaps they will rush out of those bushes, and kill us. We must keep watching. But there is

another thing. We have made a great noise. It is bad. Perhaps the Mohawks have heard it."

The warning instantly sobered his companions. They, too, suddenly saw their folly. They had little further fear of the wolf pack, but they believed there was real peril from the Mohawks. The Delawares knew that they were far inside of the Mohawk hunting grounds, and they feared that their boastful shouts of victory might have been heard by some sharp-eared Mohawk scout.

"Come, we will hurry away from here," proposed Spotted Deer.

"First we must find out about the wolves," Running Fox told him. "Then I will take the robe of the Medicine Wolf."

Spotted Deer and Dancing Owl watched carefully for a sign of the wolves, while Running Fox removed the pelt from the great White Leader. The pack, however, had apparently withdrawn. Still, the Delawares determined to make sure. They advanced cautiously into the brush, and made a thorough search, but the wolves had gone. When Running Fox finished his task, therefore, they lost little time in leaving the scene of the battle.

"Well, my brothers, now you know about this great Medicine Bundle which we took from our enemies, the Mohawks," said Running Fox.

"You have seen it give me power to do a great thing. You must tell our people about it."

"Yes, Running Fox, we will tell them about it," replied Spotted Deer.

The day had almost ended, and they realized that it would be impossible to reach the ledge before dark. Therefore they determined to spend the night at the first suitable camp-site. At twilight they stopped beside a little spring in a forest of giant pines.

"My brothers, I believe it would be foolish to make a fire," Running Fox warned his friends. "This is the country of our enemies, the Mohawks. We have made a great noise. We have left many tracks. I do not feel good about it. We must be cautious until we get away."

"We have been foolish," Spotted Deer acknowledged, uneasily.

"Well, my friends, we have killed the great white Medicine Wolf," Dancing Owl reminded them. "The mysterious Medicine Bundle has given us great power. I do not believe the Mohawks can harm us."

"They are very sly," replied Running Fox.

Despite his confidence, however, Dancing Owl agreed that it might be safer to do without the comforts of a camp-fire. The night was extremely cold, and they made a cozy little shelter of pine boughs, and, after they had cleared out

the snow and arranged a couch of pine tips, they crawled inside of it to sleep. They were dozing when they heard the dismal howling of the wolf pack, far away toward the north.

"The wolves are calling the great White Leader," said Spotted Deer.

"He cannot answer them—I have closed his ears," replied Running Fox.

The following day dawned clear and bright, and the Delawares set out on their journey in high spirits. Having overcome the fierce Medicine Wolf, they believed that they had wiped away the misfortunes of their people, and the thought filled them with joy. Then, too, they knew that their success would banish forever all doubts and suspicions against the famous Mohawk medicine trophy, and free them of blame for the ill-fortune which had come upon their people. Running Fox realized also that he had accomplished the greatest exploit in the history of the tribe, and he felt quite certain that he would be looked upon as a great Medicine Person.

"Our people are with the Minsi," said Spotted Deer. "It is good. Now we can tell those people what we have done."

"They will talk about it a long time," declared Dancing Owl. "Running Fox, you have done a big thing. You are a great warrior. I believe our people will make you a great chief,

like your father, Black Panther. Well, I will ask you to do something. You must tell them that I was with you."

"Yes, my brother, I will tell them that you were very brave," replied Running Fox. "Yes, I will tell them about Spotted Deer. He is a great warrior."

Then, as they reached the border of the densely wooded swamp where Running Fox and Spotted Deer had encountered the Mohawks, on their previous expedition, they suddenly came upon fresh snowshoe tracks. The discovery filled them with alarm.

"The Mohawks have heard us," Running Fox said, dismally. "Pretty soon they will find our trail. It is bad. We are in great danger."

"There is only one," Spotted Deer replied, hopefully.

"Perhaps there are many more along the edge of this place," Running Fox warned him.

As the lone traveler was moving in the same direction in which they were going, they determined to follow cautiously on his trail.

"It is strange," declared Spotted Deer. "If the Mohawks heard us they would have gone the other way to find us. This man is going away from that place."

"Yes, yes, it is true," said Dancing Owl. "I do not believe this scout knows anything about it."

"Nechasin, be watchful," Running Fox cautioned them.

He had barely uttered the warning when the fierce Mohawk war-cry rang in their ears, and Dancing Owl threw his arms above his head and plunged headlong into the snow.

"Oh! Oh! They have killed Dancing Owl!" cried Spotted Deer.

"Hurry! Hurry! Carry him away!" shouted Running Fox.

Unmindful of their peril, they rushed to Dancing Owl, and dragged him behind a tree. Several arrows passed dangerously near their heads as they sprang to cover. The Mohawks appeared to be concealed behind a mass of fallen tree-tops, and the Delawares were unable to guess the strength of the war-party. They knew that they had been lured into a clever trap, and they feared that it would be difficult to escape.

The Mohawks, however, showed no inclination to press the attack, and their caution convinced Running Fox that they were weak in numbers. Believing that for the moment at least they had no intention of coming to close quarters, he turned hurriedly to examine Dancing Owl. As he stooped over him Dancing Owl opened his eyes. He was bleeding freely from a gash across his forehead, and an arrow protruded from his thigh. It was evi-

dent that while his companions had passed safely through the sudden assault, he had been struck by two Mohawk arrows.

"What has happened?" he asked, weakly, as he stared wonderingly at the arrow in his leg.

"The Mohawks have caught us," Running Fox explained, quickly. "Keep still. Do not show yourself."

At that moment Spotted Deer shot his arrow, and Running Fox turned to fight off an attack. The Mohawks, however, were nowhere in sight, and he looked inquiringly at Spotted Deer.

"I saw a warrior looking over the top of that dead tree," explained Spotted Deer.

"Did you kill him?" Running Fox inquired, anxiously.

"No, my arrow went past him," replied Spotted Deer.

"It is bad," Running Fox told him. "Keep your arrows. Perhaps the Mohawks will come closer."

Then a shrill, mocking laugh rose from the spot where the Mohawks were concealed. A moment afterward one of the Mohawks called out in the Delaware dialect.

"Well, Delawares, have we frightened you?" he inquired, jeeringly. "Pretty soon you must die. Yes, we are coming over there to kill you. Do you hear those words? Yes, Delawares, we

hear you shaking over there behind those trees. We are laughing at you."

"I am going to rush out and kill that man," Spotted Deer cried, fiercely.

"No, you must not show yourself," cautioned Running Fox. "The Mohawks are very sly. They are trying to make us mad. They are watching to catch us. If you show yourself they will send their arrows through you. We must be cautious. It is the only chance to get away."

"Running Fox, I will listen to your words," agreed Spotted Deer. "I see that it is the best thing to do."

Then, as the Mohawks continued to taunt them, they suddenly became suspicious. They believed that it might be part of a wily stratagem to hold them at bay, while a courier hurried to the Mohawk camp with word of their plight. The possibility filled them with alarm. They determined to learn the strength of the force against them without further delay.

"Hi, you Mohawks," cried Running Fox. "We have heard big words, but where are the people who spoke them? Come, we are waiting for you. You say that you are coming over here to kill us. You have not come. Are you afraid? Perhaps you are thinking about what happened to your chief, Standing Wolf. Well, I can tell you. I am the warrior who killed

him. If you come over here I will kill you. Come, let us see if you are brave enough to die."

For some moments the challenge went unanswered, and the Delawares were convinced that their suspicions were correct. They believed that they had been ambushed by three or four Mohawk hunters, who hoped to keep them on the defensive until reënforcements arrived from the Mohawk camp.

"Yes, they are trying to keep us here until their people come to help them," declared Running Fox. "We must try to get away."

They turned to Dancing Owl. He had cut the arrow from his thigh, and was attempting to bind the wound with a strip of hide from the edge of his robe. As Running Fox knelt to assist him, Dancing Owl fell back exhausted.

"It is bad," said Running Fox. "Dancing Owl cannot travel."

"We must stay with him," Spotted Deer declared, loyally.

"No, that would be foolish," replied Running Fox. "If we stay here we shall all be killed. We must try to get away. We will take Dancing Owl to the ledge. Then we can make a fight. Now you must keep watching the Mohawks. I will help Dancing Owl. I will try to carry him away."

As Spotted Deer watched anxiously for the

first signs of an attack, Running Fox hurriedly bandaged the wounds of Dancing Owl. As he finished the task, they heard the shrill cry of the Nianque, the lynx, ringing through the forest, some distance to the north of them.

"It is the signal of the Mohawks!" cried Spotted Deer. "They have sent a scout to call their people."

"My brothers, if you stay here you will be killed," Dancing Owl said, weakly. "Go, and keep your lives. Leave me behind. I am not afraid to die."

"You are our brother, we will not leave you," replied Running Fox.

"We are Lenapes," Spotted Deer said, proudly. "It is enough."

"I will travel like an old woman," Dancing Owl told them. "If you take me with you, the Mohawks will soon come up with us. You have done great things. You must live to tell our people about it. Go, my brothers, before the Mohawks come and kill us."

"Dancing Owl, I have closed my ears against you," Running Fox told him. "I am going to carry you away. If the Mohawks catch us we will fight hard. If they kill us, we will die together. It is good."

"Yes, Dancing Owl, it is the only way to do," declared Spotted Deer. "We will keep together no matter what comes of it."

"Have you seen anything of the warriors over there behind those trees?" Running Fox inquired, eagerly.

"No, I have not seen anything of them," Spotted Deer told him.

"Then we will try to get away," said Running Fox. "Come, Dancing Owl, you must get on my back. Now, Spotted Deer, you must hold back the Mohawks until I get away with Dancing Owl. Then you must run after us. If the Mohawks come too close behind you, you must shout out, and I will run back and help you. Now I am going to try to get away."

He rose with Dancing Owl on his back, and began a cautious retreat, running from tree to tree, while Spotted Deer waited to fight back the Mohawks. It was some moments, however, before the latter appeared to discover what was taking place. Then they ran forward, yelling fiercely. Spotted Deer saw only three of them, and as he drove his arrow through the leader the others immediately rushed to cover.

"Hi, you Mohawks, come out and fight!" he cried, savagely. "See, I am waiting for you."

"Come! Come!" shouted Running Fox.

He was several arrow-flights away, and Spotted Deer turned to follow him. However, as he left the tree behind which he had taken shelter, the two remaining Mohawks shot their

arrows at him. He dodged behind another tree, and his foes also ran to cover.

"Keep going! Keep going!" Spotted Deer shouted to Running Fox. "There are only two warriors here. I will hold them off."

As he received no answer he concluded that Running Fox was continuing his flight. Then, as the Mohawks called out in their own tongue, he suspected that he had killed the warrior who had taunted him from ambush. The thought gave him great satisfaction.

"Mohawks, I am listening for the great words of your friend," he taunted them. "Come, tell him to speak."

There was no response, and Spotted Deer became suspicious. Had the sly Mohawks outwitted him? Had they left their hiding place, and crept away unobserved? He doubted it. Not for an instant had he taken his gaze from the trees behind which they had sheltered themselves, and he felt almost certain that they were still there. However, he knew that once past him, it would be an easy task for the Mohawks to circle through the woods, and surprise Running Fox. The possibility sickened him.

"I must find out about it," he told himself.

Then he moved cautiously to the next tree. He passed safely. The Mohawks failed to show themselves. Spotted Deer was puzzled. He searched every inch of the tree trunks behind

which his foes had concealed themselves, but he saw nothing of them. Still, the trees were large, and he knew that the Mohawks might easily remain hidden. Then he heard a shout from Running Fox. Had the Mohawks trapped him? Spotted Deer grew weak at the thought. Several long, anxious moments passed, and then he heard another shout from his friend. His heart beat fast with excitement. He was in a quandary to know what to do.

"I will go," he said, finally.

He had not gone an arrow-flight, however, when he discovered the two Mohawks close behind him. Three arrows hummed through the air, and one of the Mohawks fell to his knees. His comrade seized him and dragged him behind a tree. Spotted Deer was unharmed. An arrow had passed harmlessly within a handbreadth of his head, and another had buried itself in the tree which had saved him.

"Well, Mohawks, I have showed you how to fight," he cried, excitedly. "Come, I have some more arrows for you."

The piercing Mohawk war-cry was his response. Three times it echoed shrilly through the forest, and Spotted Deer knew that the uninjured warrior was calling for assistance. Then Running Fox called, and to reassure him Spotted Deer sent the great Delaware battle shout ringing defiantly through the wilderness.

Then, believing that for the moment there was little danger of being pursued, he sped away to join his tribesman. He felt certain that with one companion dead, and another wounded, the remaining Mohawk would have little inclination to continue the fight.

Spotted Deer soon overtook Running Fox and Dancing Owl. They had stopped to wait for him.

"Where are the Mohawks?" Dancing Owl inquired, as Spotted Deer approached.

"There were three," replied Spotted Deer. "I left them behind me. One is dead. One is wounded. And the other one is afraid to follow us."

"It is good," said Running Fox. "Come, we must go ahead before the war-party comes."

Spotted Deer insisted upon carrying Dancing Owl, although the latter protested vigorously, and declared that he was able to walk. However, his friends urged him to save his strength, so that he might be able to fight if the Mohawks followed them to the ledge.

"They will come," declared Running Fox.

"Yes, that scout back there will bring them," said Spotted Deer.

Their fears were verified when they heard the Mohawk war-cry ringing out behind them. A few moments afterward it was answered with a chorus of savage yells and whoops, and the

Delawares knew that the Mohawk scout was in communication with the war-party.

"Come, we must go fast," Running Fox told Spotted Deer.

Believing that their foes were already upon their trail, they feared that the helpless condition of Dancing Owl would make it easy for the Mohawks to overtake them. Realizing, therefore, that they would soon be brought to a stand, they determined to race toward the ledge. It appeared to offer them their one chance of escape.

"If we get to that place we can hold off the Mohawks a long time," said Running Fox. "Then perhaps we can fool them, and get away."

Despite his protests, they took turns at carrying Dancing Owl as they sped toward their goal at an exhausting pace. They knew that every moment was precious, and they made no attempt to spare themselves. The fierce yells had ceased, but the Delawares felt certain that the Mohawks were racing silently along their trail.

The ledge, however, was not far off, and the Delawares reached it in safety. They immediately concealed themselves behind the barricade of rocks which the Mohawks had left about one of their old camp-sites.

"Now we will wait for our enemies," Running Fox said, with great relief.

CHAPTER XVIII

A DESPERATE PLIGHT

After they had spread their robes at the rear of the shelter for Dancing Owl, Running Fox and Spotted Deer went to work to straighten the barricade. They knew that the Mohawks would have no difficulty in trailing them to the ledge, and they determined to take every precaution before they appeared. While Running Fox worked on the barricade, Spotted Deer collected a quantity of dry wood to be burned for lighting the ledge if the Mohawks attempted to enter.

Then, when they felt that they had made themselves secure against attack, they turned their attention upon Dancing Owl. His face showed unmistakable evidence of suffering, but he smiled bravely, and made light of his wounds. He had cut deeply into his thigh to extract the Mohawk arrow, and the wound throbbed and burned painfully. Then, too, he was weak and exhausted from loss of blood, but his courage was unshaken.

"When the Mohawks come, I will show you that I can fight," he assured his friends.

"You are very brave," declared Running Fox.

Both he and Spotted Deer, however, were greatly disturbed about the predicament of their tribesman. While they had little fear that either of his wounds would prove serious, nevertheless they realized that it might be several days before he would be able to travel. They believed that it would be the height of folly to attempt to carry him off with the Mohawks at their heels, and they wondered if they would be able to hold out against their foes until Dancing Owl could help himself.

"It is bad," Spotted Deer told Running Fox. "I believe the Mohawks will bring a great war-party against us. When they find out who we are they will try hard to kill us."

"Well, I am not afraid," declared Running Fox. "I believe this great Medicine Bundle will get us out of this thing."

"If the Mohawks do not come before it gets dark, then perhaps they will not be able to find us," said Dancing Owl. "Then we will go away before it gets light again. Yes, my brothers, pretty soon I will be able to walk."

"Those are good words," Running Fox told him.

However, he felt quite certain that the Mohawks would appear before night, and even if they should not he felt equally certain that

Dancing Owl would be unable to get away. Still, he determined to say nothing which might discourage him.

They watched in great suspense as the day drew near its end, expecting each moment to see their enemies appear before the ledge. Then as the sun finally disappeared behind the ridges, and the short winter twilight settled down, they began to hope that the Mohawks might fail to find them before it grew dark.

"If they do not come, perhaps we can carry away Dancing Owl," Spotted Deer said, hopefully. "We would be a long ways off when the light comes. Then if the Mohawks tried to follow our tracks I do not believe they could come up with us."

"My brother, perhaps the Mohawks are here," Running Fox told him. "Perhaps they are hiding out there until it gets dark. Then they will creep up close, and try to catch us. When we heard them shouting they were close behind us. They cannot be far away. Perhaps they are out there behind the trees, watching us. We must be ready."

The possibility instantly aroused Spotted Deer. He had failed to think of it. Now it made him suspicious.

"Running Fox, you are a great war-leader," he said enthusiastically. "I believe what you

say is true. Yes, I believe the Mohawks are here."

They kept a sharp watch, but the light was rapidly fading, and it was difficult to see far into the woods. However, they knew that the Mohawks had had plenty of time to overtake them, and they felt quite certain that the ledge had already been surrounded by those crafty foes. There seemed to be nothing to do, therefore, but to watch and listen. Dancing Owl had fallen into a restless slumber, and they made no attempt to rouse him.

"If we hear the Mohawks, we will call him," said Running Fox.

Then, as twilight finally gave way to darkness, the Delawares considered the advisability of making a fire. They had taken shelter in almost the center of the ledge, and they realized that it would be possible for their foes to creep up on both sides of the barricade under cover of the darkness. They decided, therefore, to make a fire, and throw a circle of light about their stronghold.

"Hi, my brothers, what are you doing?" Dancing Owl inquired, as the crackle of the flames awakened him. "You will bring the Mohawks upon us."

"We believe they are here," said Running Fox. "It is the best thing to do. See, the light

is all around us. Now the Mohawks cannot creep up and catch us."

"Yes, yes, I see that it is a good thing to do," agreed Dancing Owl.

The talk was interrupted by the sharp twang of a bow-string, and an instant later a Mohawk arrow rebounded from the back of the ledge. The Delawares looked at one another in amazement. As all of them were safely sheltered behind the barricade, they could not guess what had tempted the Mohawk to waste his arrow. When Running Fox picked it up, however, he saw that the shaft of the arrow was decorated with a number of strange symbols, and a small buckskin pouch was fastened among the feathers.

"It is a Medicine Arrow," he said, soberly. "Some Mohawk Medicine Person is trying to kill us."

"Watch out, perhaps there is something mysterious about it," Spotted Deer declared, superstitiously.

Running Fox immediately tossed it into the fire. As it began to burn the little bag smoked furiously, and the Delawares watched it with considerable uneasiness. It gave off a queer pungent odor, like burning grass. However, as it was soon consumed, and they saw no evil results, they felt considerably relieved.

"That Medicine Man is telling his people that

he can do great things," laughed Running Fox. "Well, he does not know that we have this great Medicine Bundle. No, he does not know that we have the robe of the great white Medicine Wolf. If he knew about those things he would not try to harm us."

As Running Fox ceased speaking another decorated arrow crashed against the back of the ledge. It, too, carried a mysterious medicine charm, and the superstitious Delawares promptly threw it into the flames. Then the strange attack suddenly ceased.

"It is good," said Spotted Deer. "Now the Mohawks will know that their great Medicine Man cannot harm us."

"Perhaps he has told them that we are dead," laughed Running Fox. "Well, if they come to see, we will fool them."

The Mohawks, however, seemed in no hurry to begin the attack. The Delawares neither heard nor saw anything of them. Still, they felt certain that a strong war-party was concealed somewhere beyond the range of the firelight.

"The Mohawks are like Timmeu, the wolf," declared Spotted Deer. "They are afraid of the fire."

"It is good," said Running Fox. "We have plenty of wood. We will keep it burning until the light comes."

Then the Mohawk war-cry rang threateningly through the night, and Dancing Owl scrambled from his couch and joined his companions at the barricade. They crouched low behind the bowlders, bow in hand, watching for their enemies. Many anxious moments passed, and still the Mohawks failed to appear. The Delawares became suspicious. They expected a trick.

"Watch out," warned Running Fox. "They are going to do something."

Then the war-cry again sounded, and a moment afterward a great company of warriors rushed toward the ledge. The Delawares shot their arrows with deadly effect, and the Mohawks were halted and thrown into confusion. Then they rallied under one of their war-leaders, and continued the attack. Some of them actually reached the barricade, but the Delawares shot them down before they could gain a foothold. Aware that they were sacrificing themselves in vain, the Mohawks soon lost heart, and retreated in wild disorder.

"Hi, you Mohawks, why are you running away?" Spotted Deer cried after them. "Is the fire too hot?"

"Come, if you are afraid to fight, go and get your women to lead you," shouted Dancing Owl.

Once safely beyond bow-shot, the Mohawks began to reply to the taunts. Some of them

called out in the Delaware dialect, and made boastful threats about what they intended to do. The Delawares, however, laughed at them. They had little fear that they would renew the attack before daylight.

"We gave them too much," laughed Running Fox.

He knew, however, that the fight was far from being won. The Mohawks were fierce and implacable foes, and Running Fox had little hope that they would yield so easily to defeat. He believed that they would either wait until the fire finally burned out, and then make another rush upon the ledge, or else they would try some clever bit of stratagem to catch the Delawares off their guard.

It was not long before he saw that they had determined upon the latter plan, as an arrow hummed over the barricade and dropped into the fire. A moment later another struck close behind Spotted Deer. Then several more dropped into the ledge. Running Fox instantly guessed what had happened.

"Keep close against the rocks," he warned his companions. "The Mohawks have climbed into the trees to shoot their arrows into this place. Keep low down; if you rise up they will strike you."

"It is good, they are giving us back the arrows we gave them," laughed Spotted Deer.

It was not long, however, before the Mohawks saw that the maneuver was a failure, and gave up the attack. Still the Delawares kept close behind the barricade. They feared that the concealed warriors might be trying to deceive them into exposing themselves, and they determined to take no chances.

"See, the fire is dying down," Spotted Deer said, finally. "I will crawl over there, and lay on some more wood."

When he was not attacked they concluded that the Mohawk scouts had rejoined their companions. The thought brought them considerable relief. They immediately relaxed, and after some moments Dancing Owl crawled painfully to his couch. His exertions had greatly weakened him, and he was in severe pain.

"Now you can rest easy," Running Fox told him. "The Mohawks will not come back before it gets light."

He and Spotted Deer watched through the night, but the Mohawks failed to attack them. As they heard nothing of them, the Delawares wondered if they had withdrawn beyond earshot.

"No, I do not believe it," declared Running Fox. "I believe they are close by, but they are trying to fool us. Yes, they are saying, 'We will make the Delawares believe we have

gone away. Then perhaps they will show themselves.' "

"Perhaps that is what they are trying to do," said Spotted Deer.

Then they suddenly realized that they had burned most of their wood. There was only sufficient to last a short time longer. The discovery filled them with alarm. They looked anxiously for the first trace of dawn.

"If the fire dies out before the light comes, the Mohawks will creep up here and trap us," Spotted Deer said, uneasily.

They determined to let the fire die down somewhat to make the most of the scant supply of fuel. However, as the circle of light gradually contracted, and the somber black night shadows crept steadily nearer, they feared that the crafty Mohawks would be quick to realize their predicament.

"Pretty soon the light will come," Spotted Deer said, hopefully.

Running Fox stared silently at the sky. He saw nothing to indicate the approach of day. The half-circle of light had contracted to half of its original diameter, and a considerable portion of the ledge was already dark. He feared that the moment for which the Mohawks had been waiting was close at hand.

"It is bad," he said, gloomily. "Come, we will put the rest of the wood upon the fire. The

darkness is closing around us. It will bring the Mohawks. Hurry, my brother, get the wood."

As Spotted Deer was placing the last of their fuel upon the fire, the Mohawks rushed upon them. Several daring scouts had already crept into the ledge on each side of the barricade, but they made the fatal mistake of exposing themselves too soon, and the Delawares pierced them with their arrows.

"Dancing Owl! Dancing Owl! The Mohawks have come!" cried Running Fox.

The next moment the Mohawks were upon them. Believing that they were about to die, the Delawares fought with a sullen ferocity that astonished their foes. Crouching low behind their shelter, they delivered a staggering volley of arrows that checked and bewildered the Mohawks. The latter, however, were not to be easily driven off, and they fought furiously to reach the barricade. Some of them succeeded, but the effort cost them their lives. The Delawares seemed invincible. Try as they might the Mohawks were unable to overcome them. Time after time they rushed recklessly forward to annihilate them, but each time the Delawares beat them back. Then the Mohawks suddenly abandoned the attack, and raced wildly to cover.

"That was a great fight," Running Fox cried,

enthusiastically. "Dancing Owl, how did you come out of it?"

"Nothing happened to me," replied Dancing Owl.

"See, my brothers, the light is coming," said Spotted Deer.

Dawn was breaking in the eastern sky, and the Delawares hailed it with delight. They knew that the coming of daylight would make it impossible for their foes to approach the ledge without being seen, and the thought gave them confidence.

CHAPTER XIX

A RUNNING FIGHT

As the light gradually strengthened, the Delawares peered cautiously over the top of their barricade to discover their foes. They saw nothing of them, however, and they wondered if they really had gone. They had doubts. The forest was composed of a heavy stand of hemlock and pine, and they knew that it would be easy for the Mohawks to conceal themselves within bow-range of the ledge.

"We must be cautious," said Running Fox. "I believe the Mohawks will stay here for a long time."

"Perhaps Lowan, the Cold Monster, has driven them away," replied Spotted Deer.

"Yes, it may be true, but we must watch sharp," said Running Fox.

However, as the day advanced, and the Mohawks failed to appear, the Delawares grew somewhat bolder. As they had little fear of an attack, they brought forth some of the dried deer-meat, and heated it over the embers of the fire. It warmed and strengthened them, and they began to feel more hopeful. Dancing Owl,

particularly, appeared strong and cheerful, and his companions felt greatly relieved. They believed that he would be able to travel much sooner than they had expected, and the idea made them think of getting away.

"It would be foolish to leave this place until we know what has become of the Mohawks," declared Running Fox.

"Yes, that is true," agreed Spotted Deer. "But how can we find out about it?"

"We must keep watching," replied Running Fox.

They watched closely until the end of the day, and then Running Fox suddenly proposed a plan of escape.

"My friends, I have been trying to find out how to get away," he said. "Now I know how to do it. Yes, I believe we can fool the Mohawks. Listen, I will tell you about it. When it gets dark the Mohawks will expect to find us in this place. Well, we will fool them. We will not be here. As soon as it grows dark, we will crawl out of here, and creep down to the end of the ledge. Then we will stop and listen. If the way seems clear, we will run down into the woods and hurry away. Dancing Owl, do you feel strong enough to do this thing?"

"Yes, my brother, I am ready," replied Dancing Owl.

"It is good," declared Running Fox. "Spotted Deer, how do you feel about it?"

"I believe it is the best thing to do," said Spotted Deer. "If we stay here after it grows dark I believe the Mohawks will creep up and kill us."

Having determined to make the attempt, they waited impatiently for darkness. When it finally came, they lost little time in carrying out their plan.

"Perhaps we shall find some Mohawk scouts watching out there," Running Fox warned his friends. "Then you must make a hard fight to get past them. Now we will go."

They crawled cautiously over the barricade, and stole silently along the ledge. Running Fox led, Dancing Owl followed him, and Spotted Deer went last. They reached the end of the ledge without mishap, and stopped to listen. Then, as they heard nothing to alarm them, they left the ledge and set out through the woods. They kept within touch of each other, for the night was black and starless, and they feared to become separated. They were a good distance away when they suddenly heard the savage whoops of their foes ringing through the night.

"Hi, the Mohawks have rushed into the ledge," laughed Running Fox. "Well, they will see that they waited too long."

Then as the noise quickly subsided, the Delawares suspected that their foes were searching for them. The thought urged them to a faster pace. They felt certain, however, that the extreme darkness of the night would make it impossible for the Mohawks to follow their trail.

"No, they cannot see our tracks until the light comes," Running Fox declared, confidently.

"Listen," said Spotted Deer.

They heard the call of Gokhos, the night-bird. In a few moments they heard it again, and they knew that the Mohawks were signaling to one another. It was evident that the war-party had separated to search for them.

The Delawares had little fear of being overtaken, for they had a good lead, and Dancing Owl seemed able to travel at his usual pace. His companions had little idea of the agony he was enduring. Each stride was like the thrust of a knife in his wounded thigh, but he bore the pain without a murmur, and kept doggedly at the heels of Running Fox.

"Dancing Owl, can you keep going?" Running Fox asked him, after they had traveled a long time.

"Yes, my brother," Dancing Owl replied, gamely.

Shortly before dawn they reached the river,

and then they stopped to rest. They did not dare to linger, however, for they feared that the Mohawks might have guessed which way they had gone. At sunrise, therefore, they resumed their journey.

"See, my brothers, this is the way to our people," Running Fox told them. "Pretty soon we will leave the country of our enemies. Then they will be afraid to follow us."

The river was frozen, but there was a wide channel of open water in the center, which prevented them from crossing to the other side. They hurried along at the edge of the ice, keeping a sharp watch for the Mohawks. They had traveled at a good pace, however, and they believed that it would be difficult for the latter to come up with them.

Then they heard them yelling behind them. They turned in dismay to find a company of Mohawk scouts at their heels. The Mohawks, however, were extremely cautious, and showed no desire to come to close quarters. They shot their arrows at long range, and whooped savagely, but the Delawares waited for them to advance. When they failed to do so, Running Fox suspected treachery.

"Come, we will keep going ahead," he said. "These warriors are trying to stop us until the rest of the war-party comes. If we wait to fight them, their friends will come and surround us."

"Yes, I see what they are trying to do," replied Spotted Deer.

However, each time the Delawares started ahead, the Mohawks rushed after them, and brought them to a stand. There were six or eight of them, and still they seemed afraid to force the fighting.

"Come, my brothers, we will turn back and chase them away," Dancing Owl proposed, recklessly.

"No, no, we must keep going ahead," declared Running Fox.

The Mohawks continued to follow them until the end of the day, and then they suddenly disappeared into the timber.

"See, their friends did not come to help them, and now they have turned back," said Spotted Deer.

"I am not sure about it," Running Fox declared, suspiciously.

"What do you believe they are trying to do?" Spotted Deer asked him.

"I do not know, but we must watch sharp," said Running Fox.

They advanced with more caution, for they feared that the treacherous Mohawks might have circled through the woods to get in front of them. To make sure, Running Fox made a wide detour to look for their tracks.

"No, my brothers, I did not see anything of

them," he said, as he rejoined his companions.

"Then they must have turned back," declared Spotted Deer.

"I do not believe it," replied Running Fox. "I believe they are close behind us, but they are keeping in the woods to fool us."

The Delawares continued to travel far into the night, and then they turned from the river, and took shelter beneath the drooping branches of a massive spruce. It sheltered them from the cold, and as they had little fear of the Mohawks finding them, they rolled themselves in their robes, and slept soundly.

At daylight they again set out along the river. They saw nothing of the Mohawks, and they felt quite certain that they had finally turned back. They decided that the small company of scouts who had followed them were young warriors who were eager to gain a reputation for bravery.

"They will go back, and tell their people what a big fight they made against us," laughed Spotted Deer.

Before they had gone an arrow-flight, however, the Mohawks rushed from cover, and attacked them. The Delawares quickly took shelter behind some bowlders, and kept their foes at a safe distance. The latter kept up a wild whooping, and it was evident that they hoped to bring the war-party to the spot.

"This is bad," Running Fox cried, fiercely. "We must not let them stop us. Come, we will go ahead."

They left the rocks, and ran into the timber. Then, as the Mohawks followed, they turned and drove them back. They were forced to repeat the maneuver many times, for the Mohawks continued to harass them until late in the day. Then, as their tribesmen failed to come to their assistance, they apparently lost courage and feared to venture any farther beyond their own territory. After a last, rather faint-hearted attack, in which they kept at a safe distance from the enraged Delawares, they finally withdrew.

"Now they have gone," said Running Fox. "Listen, they are telling one another what a brave thing they have done."

They heard them traveling noisily up the river, shouting their war-cry, and singing their boastful songs of victory. The Delawares had little doubt that they would return to their people with a wonderful tale of their skill and bravery.

"Well, my brothers, we have passed out of the country of our enemies," said Running Fox. "The great Medicine Bundle has kept us alive. Now the way to our people is clear. It is good."

His words filled the hearts of his friends with

joy. They knew that the perils and hardships were almost over, for they were already close upon the borders of their own hunting grounds. The Delaware camp was but two days' journey away.

"Dancing Owl, pretty soon you will be lying in your lodge," Spotted Deer told him. "We will make a big fire, and bring you some good meat. You have helped us to do a great thing. When you feel strong we will go to our people, and tell them what you have done."

"It is good," replied Dancing Owl, as his weary face lighted with pleasure.

CHAPTER XX

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN

Black Panther and his people reached the Minsi village in safety, and received a splendid welcome from their tribesmen. Big Hawk, the Minsi war-chief, met the Delawares at the river, and escorted them into the camp with great ceremony.

"We have watched for you a long time, and now you have come," he told Black Panther. "It is good. You must stay with us many days."

He set apart special lodges for the use of Black Panther, and old Sky Dog, the medicine-man. Then he called upon the Minsi to share their lodges with the Delawares, while the young men went into the forest to cut poles and bark for the new lodges which he ordered erected for the visitors.

The Minsi hunters went into the woods, and brought back great quantities of game. Then for many days the Delawares were fêted and feasted by their generous tribesmen. The Minsi spared no efforts to entertain their visitors. There were games, and songs, and dances,

and exhibitions of skill and magic, and the Delawares soon rallied from their gloom, and entered enthusiastically into the celebration.

There were two, however, who stood apart with heavy hearts. One was White Fawn, the mother of Dancing Owl, and the other was Black Panther.

The woman went about like one in a daze, and old Sky Dog declared that the Evil Spirits had bewitched her. Each night she went to the edge of the camp, and spent a long time looking into the sky, and calling upon Getanittowit, the Great One, to restore her son.

Black Panther was equally distressed, but he concealed his anxiety from all except old Sky Dog. He sent for the medicine-man many times, and asked him to interpret the dreams which disturbed his slumbers. Sky Dog, however, feared to commit himself, and he invariably gave vague and evasive answers which left him a chance of escape if his predictions proved false. Whenever Black Panther asked about Running Fox the wily old medicine-man would shake his head doubtfully, and mumble to himself. It was evident that he had little hope of again seeing that daring young warrior.

Then one night Big Hawk, the Minsi chief, came to the lodge of Black Panther. The latter immediately rose to welcome him, and gave him the seat of honor beside the fire. For a long

time they sat beside each other, smoking silently. Courtesy forbade Black Panther asking the reason for the visit, and his dignity as a great war-chief compelled him to remain silent until his visitor addressed him.

"My brother, I have come here to tell you something good," Big Hawk finally explained.

"My ears are open for the words of the great chief, Big Hawk," Black Panther said, humbly.

"Black Panther, I have had a dream," declared Big Hawk. "I saw Running Fox, your son."

Black Panther remained silent. The Minsi looked sharply into his face, but the grim Delaware war-chief showed no signs of emotion. He waited patiently for Big Hawk to proceed.

"I was in a great forest, and I heard many shouts," Big Hawk continued. "Then I hid behind a tree. When I peeped out, I saw many warriors. I do not know who they were, but they were making a great fight. Pretty soon I heard the war-cry of our people. Then I peeped out again, and I saw Running Fox. He was holding the mysterious Medicine Bundle in his hand. He was standing in front of all those warriors. They were trying to kill him, but their arrows were falling all around him. He was laughing at them. Then they saw that they could not harm him, and they became fright-

ened, and ran away. Then I did not see any more."

Big Hawk paused, and waited for Black Panther to speak. The latter, however, remained silent. He was gazing thoughtfully into the fire, and appeared to be considering the words of his friend.

"I told this thing to Black Rabbit," continued Big Hawk. "He is a great medicine-man. He says it is good. He says that Running Fox has done something big. He says that Running Fox will return to the lodge of his father. Now I have told you what I came here to talk about."

"Big Hawk, you have given me good words," said Black Panther. "You say that Black Rabbit says it is a good sign. Well, I will think about it. I will tell Sky Dog about it. He is a great Medicine Person."

Soon after the Minsi chief left the lodge Black Panther sent for Sky Dog. When he arrived, Black Panther told him about the dream. However, he said nothing about the words of Black Rabbit, the Minsi medicine-man.

"Well, my brother, I will try to find out the meaning of this thing," old Sky Dog said, mysteriously. "Perhaps it means something good. Perhaps it means something bad. I will go to my lodge, and think about it. Then I will come back, and tell you what it means."

"I will wait for your words," Black Panther told him.

Several days later Sky Dog delivered his interpretation of the dream. He, too, declared that it was a good omen, and Black Panther felt greatly encouraged. He began to hope that Running Fox might return to him. The possibility filled him with joy.

Then Machtapan, the great storm, swept down from the north, and Black Panther lost heart. Having passed through the experience himself, he knew the peril, and he had grave fears for the safety of Running Fox and his companion.

"It is bad. It is bad," he told Sky Dog.

"Yes, yes, it is bad," agreed the old medicine-man.

For many days afterward Black Panther remained in his lodge, grieving for his son. The Delawares and the Minsi both tried to rouse him from his gloom, but their efforts were in vain. He took little interest in the affairs of the camp, and seemed anxious to be alone. His tribesmen looked upon him with pity, as they saw the haughty war-chief suddenly changed into a grief-stricken old man.

Then one day as he was sitting moodily before the fire in his lodge, he heard a great shout ringing through the Minsi camp, and the sound of many people talking at once. He raised his

head, and listened anxiously. For an instant a great hope revived in his heart but he feared to trust it.

"Call Black Panther! Call Black Panther!" shouted the Minsi.

A moment afterward Big Hawk hurried into the lodge. He was trying desperately to conceal his emotion, but the light in his eyes betrayed him.

"My brother, I have come to tell you what you wish to hear," he said, slowly. "Running Fox is approaching the camp."

For an instant only, Black Panther lost control of himself, and the stern, battle-scarred war-chief relaxed into the loving father. Then he mastered his feelings, and again became the cold, impassive war-leader.

"It is good," he said, calmly. "I will go to meet him."

They found the people gathered at the edge of the camp, looking eagerly up the river. Three warriors were approaching slowly along the edge of the ice. A picked company of Minsi and Delaware scouts were hurrying to meet them and escort them to the camp.

"See, there are three," the Delawares cried, excitedly. "Only two went away."

White Fawn, the mother of Dancing Owl, pushed eagerly through the crowd as she heard the words. She shaded her eyes with her hand,

and looked wildly up the river. For one brief moment she seemed in doubt. Then she recognized the figure of her son.

"It is Dancing Owl! It is Dancing Owl!" she screamed, hysterically. "My son has come back to me. See, my son has come back."

The distracted women would have rushed to the river, but she was seized by her friends, and led into the camp.

As the three young warriors approached the village all eyes were turned upon Black Panther. He stood erect, and dignified, with no trace of the emotions that were raging fiercely in his heart. The Minsi looked upon him with respect. The Delawares were proud to acknowledge him as their chief.

Then as Running Fox and his companions came within hailing distance, the Lenapes raised a great shout of welcome that roared through the valley, and shook the hills. The young warriors replied with the ringing war-cry of their nation. Then they advanced triumphantly toward the camp.

They were met at the edge of the village by a great throng of friends and tribesmen who crowded eagerly about them, each anxious to be the first to greet them. Then Big Hawk called out for the people to disperse, and allow them to pass.

As the lads entered the camp, White Fawn

rushed forward, and threw her arms about Dancing Owl. He held her in a silent embrace, while the Lenapes looked on with approving eyes.

Running Fox went directly to his father. For one long moment they looked joyously into each other's eyes. Then they clasped hands.

"My son, you have come back—it is enough," said Black Panther.

"My father, I have brought you the robe of the great white Medicine Wolf," said Running Fox.

The face of the famous Delaware war-chief flushed with pride, as he took the coveted trophy from the hand of his son.

"See, my friends, Running Fox has done what he set out to do," he cried, exultantly. "He has brought the robe of the great white Medicine Wolf."

The lads were paraded about the village in triumph. Then Big Hawk summoned the people to the council Lodge. When they had assembled he welcomed the famous young warriors to the Minsi camp.

"My brothers, you are young men, but you are great warriors," he told them. "Running Fox, all my people know about you. You have done some big things, but this is the greatest thing of all. Spotted Deer, you are very brave. We have heard about you. You have helped

Running Fox to do big things. Dancing Owl, you are a great warrior. You have killed many Mohawks. Yes, my people know about it. Now, my friends, I will tell you that we are glad to have you here, so that our young men can see you. You must stay here a long time. Now I am going to ask your great chief, Black Panther, for some words."

"Lenapes, I have not much to tell you," said Black Panther. "You see what these brave young men have done. It is a great thing. Delawares, now you will know that the mysterious Mohawk Medicine Bundle is good. You will know that it gave these brave warriors power to do great things. Some of you talked against it. Now you will feel different about it. You will know that it had nothing to do with the bad days which have come upon us. You must not say anything more against it. I have finished."

After the Delaware war-chief had ceased speaking, the people began to call for Running Fox to address them.

"We wish to hear Running Fox," they cried. "Come, Running Fox, give us some good words."

"My friends, you have asked me for some good words," said Running Fox. "Well, I will tell you about Spotted Deer and Dancing Owl. They are very brave. Dancing Owl was

captured by the Shawnees. That is why he did not come back from the hunt. The great Mohawk Medicine Bundle led us to him. We helped him to get away. Then he went with us to kill the mysterious white Medicine Wolf. He was very brave. The Mohawks shot their arrows into him, but he laughed at them. Now I will tell you about my brother, Spotted Deer. He is a great warrior. He held off the Mohawks until I carried Dancing Owl away. He was very brave. If he had not been with me, I do not believe I could have done this thing. Now, Delawares, I will give you some big words. The great Medicine Bundle is good. It has given me the power of Standing Wolf. The great White Wolf is dead. The bad days will pass. The game has come back to our hunting grounds. We saw many tracks near the village. Getanittowit, the Great One, has heard our words. Mauwallauwin, the Great Hunter, will fill our lodges with meat. When Siquon, the-time-of-growing-things, comes, we will go back to our village with light hearts. I have done what I set out to do. I have showed you that the mysterious Medicine Bundle is good. I have showed you that I had nothing to do with the bad days that came upon us. It is enough. I have finished."

"Delawares, what Running Fox has told you is true," old Sky Dog shouted, excitedly. "The

mysterious white Medicine Wolf is dead. The bad days have passed. The great Mohawk Medicine Bundle has brought these things to pass. It is good. I talked against it, but now I feel different about it. Yes, I knew about these great things before Running Fox came here. Now what I saw, has come to pass. Many good days will come upon us."

Many more noted warriors made speeches complimenting Running Fox and his friends, and the day had ended when the council finally broke up. Then the Minsi lighted a great fire in the center of the camp, and the Lenapes passed the night celebrating the great achievement of their tribesmen.

(1)

THE END

RECENT BOOKS FOR BOYS

THE BOY SCOUTS YEAR BOOK

Edited by FRANKLIN K. MATHIEWS

The biggest book for boys! Contains stories by favorite authors, articles by experts, messages from famous men on all subjects nearest a boy's heart.

SCOTT BURTON ON THE RANGE

By E. G. CHENEY

A tale of the western forests, full of exciting happenings and much real woodcraft.

THE RING-NECKED GRIZZLY

By WARREN H. MILLER

A big game hunter reveals the mysteries of the trail in this story of two boys' visit to the Rockies.

DICK ARNOLD OF RARITAN COLLEGE

By EARL REED SILVERS

A splendid football story, by a man who knows the game and who shows college life as it really is.

DICK ARNOLD PLAYS THE GAME

By EARL REED SILVERS

Dick Arnold shows his metal in basketball. Another college story that knows what it is talking about.

THE SILVER PRINCE

By EDWARD LEONARD

The old Wild West is the scene of Terry's thrilling struggle to keep possession of his dead father's silver mine.

D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK LONDON

T 678